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Cover Story
Sri Krishna : The Eighth Child
K.M. Munshi
(Page 7).

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Vol. 47 No. 2, August 31, 2000

In this Issue

Page

● Prayer	5
● Echoes from Eternity : Excellence: Sri Krishna sets the Standard	6
● Kulapati Vani: Sri Krishna The Eighth Child — <i>Dr.K.M.Munshi</i>	..	..	7
● A Letter from the President Environmental Protection-1	..	..	12
● Mahatma Gandhi: Man of the Millennium.. Theory of Incarnation	..	..	15
● Relevance of the Philosophy of Zarathushtra — <i>Dr. L. M. Singhvi</i>	..	..	16
● Electoral Reforms-2 — <i>R. Venkataraman, Former President of India</i>	..	..	23
● In Memoriam Rashtrabandhu S. Nijalingappa	..	..	37
● Dr. Usha Mehta A True Bharatiya Woman and Swantra Yogini — <i>S. Ramakrishnan</i>	..	..	41
● Shyama Prasad's efforts for India - British Settlement — <i>Dr. K. M. Munshi</i>	..	..	46
● Shyama Prasad Mookherjee: A Peerless Patriot — <i>M. V. Kamath</i>	..	..	51
● Devaki Krishna Temple in Goa — <i>K. Pandurang P. Kamath</i>	..	..	57
● Valmiki Ramayana	..	..	60
● Darbari Seth: Role Model In Indian Youth — <i>M. R. Pai</i>	..	..	62
● Krishna and Human Relations-20 — <i>Harindra Dave</i>	..	..	66

			Page
● Pride Humbled - X			
Pride of Narada	..	..	69
— Justice A.S.P. Iyer			
● Kashmir and its Future - 3	..	..	71
— Gen. K. V. Krishna Rao			
● Bhakta Mira	..	..	79
— Bankey Behari			
● Some Ideas of the 20th Century-10	..	..	89
— V.S.R.K.			
● Doctor Speaks			
In Academi Medicine for Sale?	..	..	95
— Prof. (Dr.) B. M. Hegde			
● Bhavan's Book of the Fortnight			
Bhagavad Gita : Gospel of Hinduism for House Holders..			101
— Yadav Nandu			
● World of Books	..	..	105
● Without Comment	..	..	110
● Bhavan's news	..	..	114

Our Cover

Sri Krishna The Eighth Child

In our next issue :

- Lord Ganesa
— S. Balakrishnan
- Three Golden Rules for Governors
— Dr. P.C. Alexander
- Towards a Carnival of Life
— Dr. Rashmi Mayur
- Governors as Chancellors in UP : A Look Back
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आ नो भद्राः क्रतवो यन्तु विश्वतः ।

Let noble thoughts come to us from every side
— Rigveda, 1-89-i



Prayer

करारविन्देन पदारविन्दं
मुखारविन्दे विनिवेशयन्तम् ।
वटस्य पत्रस्य पुटे शयानं
बालं मुकुन्दं मनसा स्मरामि ॥

*Karaaravindena Padaaravindam
Mukhaaravinde Viniveshayantam
Vatasya Patrasya Pute Shayaanam
Balam Mukundam Manasaa Smaraami*

I meditate on the child Mukunda (Sri Krishna), lying in the hollow of a banyan leaf, placing, with His lotus hand, His lotus foot in His lotus mouth.

—Krishna Karvnmruta-II-58

Echoes from Eternity

Excellence: Sri Krishna Sets The Standard

Excellence is a quality that is not easily defined but instinctively understood. It is an ideal that we aspire for in whatever we think or do. But without a frame of reference we are apt to grope in the dark and clutch at something that is only the second best. Where then are we look for the highest standard or standards? The scriptures, perhaps. When a scripture tells us that God Himself has set the standard/s, we may well give up our doubts and feel confident in our pursuit of excellence.

In the tenth chapter of the Bhagavad Gita, prompted by a query from His great friend and disciple, Arjuna, Sri Krishna mentions the 'pre-eminences' (Pradhanyatah) among His manifestations, His 'Glories' – Vibhutayah. First there are certain things that may be considered as excellent in themselves: knowledge, forgiveness, truthfulness, self-control, serenity, fearlessness, ahimsa, equality, contentment,

austerity and giving. Then there are certain objects, animate and inanimate, celestial and terrestrial. Confining ourselves to those that we can easily identify through knowledge or sight, the following may be taken as the standards of excellence. (as mentioned by Sri Krishna):

The *wind* among purifiers; the *Ganges* among the rivers; the *peepul* among trees; the *spring* among seasons; 'A' or the *first letter* among the alphabets; *Rama* among warriors; *Krishna* among the Vrishnis; *Arjuna* among the Pandavas; *Vyasa* among the sages; the *lion* among the beasts; *Garuda* (the eagle) among birds; *knowledge of the self* (Atmavidya) among branches of learning; *logic* in debate; *silence* of the things secret; the *Himalayas* among the unmoving; and *natural qualities* such as beauty, memory, intelligence and steadfastness.

□□□

[Sponsored by the Hyderabad Kendra of the Bhavan]

Kulapati Vani

SRI KRISHNA

THE EIGHTH CHILD

□ K.M. MUNSHI

There was an air of expectancy throughout Vraja. Every heart throbbed with impatience, each in its own way. Devaki, the wife of the Shoora Chief Vasudeva, was expecting her eighth child.

As the fateful day came nearer, she began to bloom like a flower in the spring day after day, and her body and mind glowed with a joy she had never known before. Her eyes shone with devotion for, before her, awake or asleep, she saw the Lord.

At the same time, she was full of anxiety. She found it hard to believe that, weak and helpless and unfortunate as she was, the Lord would be born to her. And again would He really come to deliver the Yadavas from Kamsa? Or, would her

next child also be killed by her wicked cousin?

In spite of these doubts, faith never deserted her. Surely, the prophecy of Sage Narada and the promise of Muni Veda Vyasa could not but come true.

As the time for Devaki to give birth to a child drew nearer, Kamsa began to take great precautions. He withdrew all the servants from the palace in which she and her husband were held captive. This time no midwife was to be in attendance as before. Instead, Putana, his trusted cousin and the wife of Pradyota, his equally trusted captain of the guards, had come to live with them. But Devaki hated Putana so much that she would not let her come near her.

Vasudeva, however, never allowed Devaki to feel the

THE EIGHTH CHILD

want of company or even the absence of a maid-servant. He loved his frail, beautiful wife and was attentive to every little want of hers. He joined her in her prayers and cheered her whenever she felt troubled. Every evening he would sit by her side as she lay on the balcony watching the turbid waters of the Yamuna, and talk of ancient heroes.

They talked of the Lord and of His Grace and were united by a bond of unwavering faith. Sometimes, as they talked of Him, they felt as if He stood before them, blessing them with His arm extended.

Expectancy filled Mathura as well as the villages and hermitages of Vrajabhumi. Everyone, during those nine years, had looked forward to the day when *adharma*, which prevailed under Kamsa, would

be rooted out. Every time Kamsa killed a child of Devaki's, the people computed the time when the deliverer would be born. Now that the event they had waited for was about to happen, they took vows to propitiate the inimically disposed stars and prayed to the gods to send the deliverer soon. In the hermitages which had sprung up on both sides of the

Yamuna, the sages began to offer sacrificial prayers to call on the Lord. The Brahmins in their homes never prayed nor performed a



ritual without a fervent supplication to send the deliverer.

This time also Kamsa himself was moved by strange fears. Though time and again he had crushed his enemies, the Yadavas, as a people, had not accepted his sway. Many

Yadava Chiefs had left Vrajabhumi. Some, he knew very well, had become soft-spoken hypocrites who lauded him in public but prayed for his downfall in secret. His guards and agents remained loyal to him because he alone stood between them and the wrath of the Yadavas.

As the days passed, Kamsa was seized with panic. The reports which came in every day of how the people were expecting the deliverer to be born soon, strained his nerves. He grew suspicious of everyone. He grew excited over small things. Often, he was absent-minded. He lost his sleep. He dreamt of terrible things.

Under his orders the guards, who kept a watch over Vasudeva and Devaki, were changed every day. Orders were issued that no one could see them except Gargacharya, the family priest, who attended to the daily rituals which could not be denied to Vasudeva. Putana, who lived with them, sent him messages about

Devaki's health day by day. In order to put down popular outbursts when he killed the eighth child of Devaki, he posted Magadhan soldiers in key positions about the town.

It was the eighth day of the dark half of the month of Sravan. Throughout the day, there was thunder and lightning, and the rains came in showers and the wind lashed the streets. About noontime, in spite of the foul, stormy weather, Gargacharya came to perform the daily rituals at the palace. After they were over, the old priest embraced Vasudeva and whispered a message in his ear.

The rains continued to pour down heavily, and, even before sunset, darkness fell over the town. Putana, who had gone to her house in the morning, could not return to her post as the roads had been flooded. The palace guards, shivering to the bones, shut themselves up in their rooms leaving the gates open for her to come in.

The palace was wrapped in darkness except for the oil

THE EIGHTH CHILD

lamps which threw a flickering light in the room where Devaki lay. Vasudeva seated by her side. The rains came in torrents and made a terrifying noise on the roof and the rolling thunder reverberated in the empty halls.

The sky was lit up by a lightning flash. A terrific thunderclap shook the foundations of the palace. Devaki, suddenly frightened, sat up. The next moment, she took hold of Vasudeva's hand in her effort to keep down the pain. Her joyful eyes were brimming with tears as she looked at her husband in a mood of worship.

'Lord, He is coming,' she said, quelling the pangs of the moment. Vasudeva, with great tenderness led her into the adjoining room.

It was midnight. The rains continued to fall and the lightning to flash. Devaki, tingling with ecstasy, gave birth to a child almost effortlessly when the auspicious constellation of *Abhijit* was on the eastern horizon.

Her tender husband, Vasudeva acted as a careful midwife. As he handled the baby on whom their only hope was set, he gasped. The boy was perfectly formed and coloured like a sky-blue lotus. He did not cry as is the wont of newborn babies, but a beatific smile was on his tiny lips.

Vasudeva, as he looked at the child, was dazed. For a moment he saw the Lord standing in all the splendour of His glory before him and holding in His hands the mace, the discus, the conch and the lotus. Sage Veda Vyasa's prophetic words had come true!

Vasudeva shook himself awake; now he had to act his part. He left the baby with Devaki for a while, took two oil-lamps in his hands, walked up to the balcony and waved them as if performing *arti*. From across the river came the response, a torch moving in a circle.

Vasudeva returned to Devaki and washed the baby clean. He gave it a lump of

THE EIGHTH CHILD

wool soaked in honey to suck and put it in a basket.

'Devaki, I must go now,' he said.

'But how will you go? It is raining stormily and the Yamuna is in spate.'

'His will be done,' replied Vasudeva and went to discover what the guards were doing. And there were the guards lying asleep behind the closed doors of their rooms, Putana had not returned from her home and the gates of the palace were unlocked!

Vasudeva wrapped the child in a shawl, placed it in a basket, covered it with a small mat and, lifting the basket on his shoulders, stepped out of the palace. Two furlongs away, the river flowed over a stony ledge, formed in the bed, which provided a natural ford for going across to Gokul. He made his way to that point, with the basket on his head and the new-born babe sleeping quietly with its great toe in its mouth.

And there was a miracle. The rains stopped. A dark low cloud-like the hood of a cobra-formed a canopy over the basket.

Vasudeva went to the ford and crossed the Yamuna hurriedly, in spite of the waters rushing headlong along their course. On the opposite bank, under a tree, stood Gargacharya and Nanda, the chief of the Gokul Yadavas.

Garga relieved Vasudeva of his burden and handed him another basket.

'Whose child is it?' asked Vasudeva.

'Yashoda gave birth to a daughter this morning.'

Vasudeva, full of joy and gratitude, said to Nanda, 'Nanda, how can I ever fulfil my obligation to you?'

Nanda touched Vasudeva's feet. 'Lord, you are the master. Whatever I have is yours,' he replied.

Nanda took the basket from Gargacharya's hands. The mat which covered it slipped away. Lightning flashed. And he beheld the blue, beautiful baby, saw its little eyes open and close, and a giant wave of affection surged in the old cowherd's heart.

The Deliverer has come.





However, I must add that compared to the awakening elsewhere in the world, the awareness in India of looming threats to the planet at the hands of man can only be said to be feeble.



ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION-1

When Mahatma Gandhi cautioned humanity against indiscriminate use of technology and its ill effects he was doubted by some as anti-science and as an obscurant. A time there was when, as Mr. Willy Brandt amusingly put it, one aroused smiles, if not outright laughter, by the mere mention of the consequences the ruthless plundering of the earth would have on future generations. Luckily, those days of innocence are gone. Today, there are 30 Green members in the European Parliament representing 12 member States, and as many as 120 Green MPs in 11 West European countries as vigilant watchdogs against infringement of the rights of Mother Nature and Mother Earth.

In our own country, we have Baba Amte, Sunderlal Bahuguna and others to remind our people that in bowing to the compulsions of development, we should not take the country to the brink of ecological disaster.

However, I must add that compared to the awakening elsewhere in the world, the awareness in India of looming threats to the planet at the hands of man can only be said to be feeble.

At the global level already tropical forests are shrinking by 11 million hectares a year with only one million hectares added in their place, representing a net annual loss

of 10 million hectares. The percentage of land under forests in India is now only 17—one-third of the optimum regarded as necessary for maintaining the effectiveness of the ecosystems and the pristine purity of habitats. Thirty-one million hectares (equalling the area of Belgium) of trees in Central and Northern Europe (exceeding 20 per cent of the forested area) have suffered almost irretrievable damage linked to air pollutants and are being visited with acid rain.

An estimated 26 million tonnes of topsoil of cropland are lost every year after allowing for newly formed soil. Some six million hectares of new deserts are formed annually, and the UN Conference on Desertification has noted that more than one-third of the earth's land is arid and 14 per cent of the world's population living in dry lands is menaced by the remorselessly advancing desert. Thousands of lakes in the industrial North are now biologically dead, and thousands more are dying. We have collectively managed to convert the incomparable sea itself into a foul sink, and are now trying to fill the limitless space with stinking garbage thrown out by space voyagers!

Modern super technology which causes all the ecological havoc, can be pressed into service, first to contain, and next, to remedy, the ill-effects, provided commitment to the cause of saving the earth rouses the same fervour as does an ideology, not merely at some esoteric elite



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level or at the level of Governments, but also in the hearts and minds of the common people. This is where the launching by citizen groups of an imaginative and sustained public education campaign targetted at varying levels of perception becomes a crucial component of the strategy to motivate and mobilise public opinion.

The reason is simple. Environmental disasters do not burst on the scene dramatically and at one stroke. Mostly they creep upon the human race imperceptibly as a cumulative result of innumerable acts of folly or default spread across regions or generations. Their effects are most often not palpable and do not directly touch the man-in-the-street as he goes about his daily chores.

Air pollution, acid rain, extinction of species, loss of biodiversity warming of climate, ozone hole, desertification—these for him are mere jargons and do not impinge on his work-a-day existence in a tangible and concrete manner. Not a few of the hazards arise as consequences of industrialisation or as events (for example, deforestation) which are much too diffuse or distant for the common man to understand.

C. Subramaniam
(C. Subramaniam)

August 31, 2000
Chennai



MAHATMA GANDHI

Man of the Millennium

THEORY OF INCARNATION

In Hinduism, incarnation is ascribed to one who has performed some extraordinary service to mankind. All embodied life is, in reality, an incarnation of God, but it is not usual to consider every living being an incarnation. Future generations pay this homage to one who, in his own generation, has been extraordinarily religious in his conduct. I can see nothing wrong in this procedure; it takes nothing from God's greatness, and there is no violence done to Truth. There is an Urdu saying which means: "Adam is not God, but he is a spark of the Divine". And, therefore, he who is the most religiously behaved has most of the divine spark in him. It is in accordance with this train of thought, that Krishna enjoys, in Hinduism, the status of the most

perfect incarnation.

This belief in incarnation is a testimony of man's lofty spiritual ambition. Man is not at peace with himself till he has become life unto God. the endeavour to reach this state is the supreme, the only ambition worth having. And this is self-realization. This self-realization is the subject of the *Gita*, as it is of all scriptures. But its author surely did not write it to establish that doctrine. The object of the *Gita* appears to me to be that of showing the most excellent way to attain self-realization. That which is to be found, more or less, clearly spread out here and there in Hindu religious books, has been brought out in the clearest possible language in the *Gita* even at the risk of repetition.

M. K. Gandhi

[Sponsored by Bhavan's Gandhi Institute of Computer Education and Information Technology]

RELEVANCE OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF ZARATHUSHTRA

Parsi New Year falls on Aug. 21, 2000

□ DR. L.M.SINGHVI, M.P.

Co-Chairman, Bhavan International and former Indian
High Commissioner to U.K.

The Parsi Tradition has uniquely enriched and literally "sweetened" our national life redeeming the metaphorical promise the Parsis made when they arrived on the shores of India.

Originally, Jadi Rana, King of a local Hindu Kingdom in Gujarat, had the honour and the privilege of giving asylum and extending hospitality to the persecuted followers of the great prophet Zarathushtra (Zoroaster). That was more than a millennium ago, perhaps around 936 CE. The India rainbow became more resplendent when the Zarathushtrians came from Persia to the bosom of the kindred civilisation in India. Ironically, those victims were

persecuted in Persia and came from the land of Cyrus, the Great, who symbolised the best of the traditions of Tolerance. They were threatened by fanaticism and invasion in their own land. If I may say so, they were God's gift to India, a gift India has cherished.

The descendants of those persecuted refugees (May their tribe increase!) have flourished in India and have grown from strength to strength, except regrettably in terms of numbers. The ancient traditions of Iranian Aryans and Indo-Aryans thus came together in the tenth century, AC in Gujarat. That transplanted community is the pride of the country to which they came with the precious treasure of

Zarathushtra's teachings. Significantly, they have contributed enormously, indeed immeasurably, in almost every walk of India's national life, as merchants, entrepreneurs, philanthropists, political leaders, parliamentarians, lawyers, judges, doctors, soldiers, engineers, scientists, management experts, administrators, artists, art historians, art collectors, art critics, actors, poets and professors. The many-splendoured and wide-ranging contributions of Zarathushtrians to Indian life is so outstanding and colourful that our Festival of Parsis which I organised when I was President of India International Centre, a decade ago with the active co-operation of the Anjuman and its President, Lt. General Sethna fully occupied all of eight days, without a dull moment. During that celebration we presented for the benefit of the wider Indian community and, indeed the Parsis themselves, the many remarkable facets of

the Parsi community and its many distinguished achievers, for after all it is a community of born achievers. I have a feeling that a repeat performance of that Festival would be a very good idea.

Luminous Philosophy

The prophet Zarathushtra who described himself as an *Ereshi* and *Manthram*, a seer and a preacher of the Mantra, the Sacred Word of Power, blessed and endowed his followers, with dedication to Ahura Mazda, embodiment of Life and Wisdom, and gave them as his priceless legacy. It has sustained the community both in Iran and in India, and indeed wherever the Zarathushtrians have gone. *It*

The prophet Zarathushtra who described himself as an *Ereshi* and *Manthram*, a seer and a preacher of the Mantra, the Sacred Word of Power, blessed and endowed his followers, with dedication to Ahura Mazda, embodiment of Life and Wisdom, and gave them as his priceless legacy.

is the badge of their being, their essence of the identity. That legacy has shaped the psyche and ethos of Parsis and Zarathushtrians in India and elsewhere across all geographical boundaries. I admire and extol that legacy which is, in fact, a universal legacy but which was vouchsafed to Zarathushtrians as a historically chosen people at a historic moment in world history. It was a gift to Zarathushtra Spitama not only to his cousin Maidhyomaongha or to the good Kavi Vishtaspa, the ruler of Bactria (now Afghanistan) and to his courtiers but to the Aryans of yore who were willing to imbibe his teachings. As an Indian with an Indo-Aryan past, and as a descendant of what the Avesta tradition describes as *Airyamna*, the Arya clan, I claim, I have the right and the

obligation to celebrate Zarathushtra's diamond bright legacy.

The Zarathushtrian legacy is the legacy of Good Mind or Vohu Mana, the legacy of *Asha* comparable to Vedic Rta and Dharma, Cosmic Order, Truth and Justice; Armaiti, Haurvatat or Vedic Sarvatat (Purnata) Perfection, Khashthra, Vedic Kshtra, that is courage and power and *Ameretata* or *Vedi Amrutatava* that is Immortality. Both Zarathushtrians and the Vedic people are children of immortality. Both in the Gathas and in the Vedas, the Sun is the symbol of Truth and Wisdom. Fire is the emblem of the Divine, of the Pure and Righteous and is the sacred witness at all ceremonies, Zarathushtrian and Vedic. The Vedic and the Zarathushtrian view of life ingrain and inculcate in us the sense of the

The Zarathushtrian legacy is the legacy of Good Mind or Vohu Mana, the legacy of *Asha* comparable to Vedic Rta and Dharma, Cosmic Order, Truth and Justice; Armaiti, Haurvatat or Vedic Sarvatat (Purnata) Perfection, Khashthra, Vedic Kshtra, that is courage and power and *Ameretata* or *Vedi Amrutatava* that is Immortality.

sacred which uplifts the secular from the merely mundane and imparts to our life on earth a spiritual and ethical dimension.

New Book

I should share with you the happy tidings of the recent publication of Mr. Piloo Navavutty Jangalwala's book called the Gathas of Zarthusstra Hymns in Praise of Life and Wisdom, with a translation and commentary by her. I was honoured by her invitation to write the Foreword to the book. She has given an engaging account of the Zarathushtrian tradition and an excellent translation of the Gathas. She has described the conceptual framework of the soulful and prayerful poetry, philosophy, ethics and the way of life bequeathed by the great prophet Zarthusstra. It is a book of glorious yesterdays, of vibrant continuity and of a promising future. The book brings to us for the new millennium the message of Zarthusstra across the centuries and across all human frontiers.

I would like in particular to refer to the Gatha Ahunavaiti, the Gatha of Free Choice, in which we find the lament of *Gaush Urva* and

Zarthusstra at Prayer. The legend of *Gaush Urva* relates to a uniquely created bull colloquially known as Gavyo-Dad from the earth on the banks of River Oxus. Ahura Mazda, the embodiment of Life and Wisdom, also manifested himself through Gayomard or Mortal human from the earth. But Angra Mainyu, the hostile spirit, then burst forth from the bowels of the earth and unleashed an avalanche of evils on Gayomard and Gavyo-Dad that is human beings and beasts. It also cast a blight on the plants and the vegetation. The bull or the cow grew emaciated and died and it was from his or her dead body that there rose a living soul, *Gaush Urva*. The dialogue of Earth and Civilization in peril or the ecologically embattled and morally challenged *Gaush Urva* and the grace of eternal Ahura Morda which gave the world the prophet Zarthusstra to establish and maintain the spirit of abounding peace on earth has a compelling relevance in our age and time. There is a lesson in the lament of *Gaush Arva* and the Gatha of Free Choice, a lesson of light for all of us.

Main Beliefs

Central to Zarathushtrian ethos and its genesis are beliefs such as rewards and punishments, Heaven and Hell, the Resurrection of the Dead and the future coming of the

Central to Zarathushtrian ethos and its genesis are beliefs such as rewards and punishments, Heaven and Hell, the Resurrection of the Dead and the future coming of the Saoshyant, a world saviour.

Saoshyant, a world saviour. Across the trackless centuries, the Zarathushtrian ethos vivifies the three steps representing the motto of the noble tradition of Zarthusht, *Humta*, Good Thoughts, *Hukhta*, Good Words, and *Huvarashta*, Good Deeds which we find on the tripods of Afarghans or fire censers. As we reflect on Zarathushtra's legacy and tradition, we can see the bell above the leaping flames of sacred fire and hear its ceremonial sound because there is a resonance in the living tradition which makes the sacred remembrance a living present and ever relevant promise.

The inspiration of Zarathushtra abides and is enduring. The sense of the sacred which is the hyphen that joins and the buckle that binds the Parsis has been their anchor

and mainstay. It has been the elan vital of the radiant and magnificent contribution which the followers of Zarthusht have made and the many splendoured successes they have achieved in India. Those successes have the hallmark of integrity, of ethics and of a sense of public duty.

Great Parsis

The Diamond Jubilee of the Parsi Anjuman in Delhi is only one of the benchmarks in the Parsi Millennium in India. We recall the glorious contributions of that Grand old Man of India, Dadabhoy Naoroji, the freedom fighter, Madam Cama, the wise and moderate leader, Sir Phirozeshah Mehta, and many others in our freedom movement. Remember that the first great entrepreneur of India was a Parsi, the first three Indian members of the House of Commons were Parsis, the

first great nuclear scientist of India was a Parsi—Sri Homi Bhabha. Jamsetji Tata was followed

The inspiration of Zarathushtra abides and is enduring. The sense of the sacred which is the hyphen that joins and the buckle that binds the Parsis has been their anchor and mainstay.

own legal fraternity, and of course the living legend of India, my good and esteemed

by Bharat Ratna J.R.D. Tata and now Sri Ratan Tata who is gloriously carrying forward the Tata tradition. The first Advocate General of India before independence was a Parsi. Parsis have their own Gujarati language and literature, they have their own traditional attire. Parsi theatre was a pioneering phase in Indian theatre. Some of them have also distinguished themselves on the silver screen and in classical and popular Indian Music. One of the greatest contemporary master conductors in the world is a Parsi. Parsi poets and writers have carved a niche for themselves as litterateurs. The list in long and extraordinarily distinguished both in eminence and versatility, but I cannot close without referring to Mr. Justice Bharucha, Shri Soli Sorabjee, Shri Fali Nariman and Shri Andhyarunjna of my

friend Nani Palkhivala who completed his 80 years on January 16, 2000. A charismatic communicator, a great public educator and an orator par excellence, he has done the country and the profession to which he belongs proud. Nani Palkhivala's impassioned and persuasive eloquence was of such a quality that, in the words of Shakespeare, "the air is still, and the mute wonder lurketh in men's ear, to steal his sweet and honeyed sentences". Nani is of course a class by himself, but it is also true that in nearly every walk of life in India, we do have a significant Parsi presence.

The psyche and ethos of Parsis were undoubtedly shaped by the precepts of Zarathushtra, in triumphant glory, in trials and tribulations of adversity, and in their transplanted and happy resurgence in India. The

THE RELEVANCE OF THE PHILOSOPHY...

community and those who belong to it have striven, as far as it is given to mere mortals, to live up to the precepts of Zarathushtra.

The psyche and ethos of Parsis were undoubtedly shaped by the precepts of Zarathushtra, in triumphant glory, in trials and tribulations of adversity, and in their transplanted and happy resurgence in India.

what counts is not the numbers but the quality of the contribution that those numbers, big or small, bring to bear upon

In more than a 1000 years of their estimable presence on the Indian sub-continent, they have made a contribution quite out of proportion to their numbers. They prove the proposition that

and pour into the mainstream of the life of the country. And I am glad to say that Parsis count and account for a lot in the life of the Indian nation. I salute the Parsis of India.

□ □ □

BOMBAY HOUSE,
FORT, MUMBAI 400 001

25 January 2000

My dear Dr Singhvi

I cannot tell you how much I was moved by your article on the Relevance of the Philosophy of Zarathushtra. The article is the best I have ever read on the Parsi religion and my only regret is that very few Parsis can understand the relevance of the Philosophy of Zarathushtra in Parsi Zoroastrian Psyche and Ethos.

With warm regards,

Yours sincerely,


N A Palkhivala

Dr L M Singhvi
18 Wellington Crescent
New Delhi 110 001

ELECTORAL REFORMS-2

□ R. VENKATARAMAN, Former President of India and Patron, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan

COMPULSORY VOTING

One other suggestion I would like to make is to make voting compulsory for the State and Union Lower Houses. At first sight, it may look a formidable and forbidding task. But if we look at the issue from the grass-roots level, it will prove that the scheme is eminently feasible. For instance most of the Panchayats are small ones with less than a population of 1000 and the number of voters may be around five hundred. Is it such a formidable task for the local authority to ensure that this five hundred people attend the polls? This takes care of 70% of our rural population. Instead of candidates distributing slips containing the name and number of the voters and the polling booth, the

panchayat itself may undertake the task and also ensure that the voter exercises his franchise. The advantage of compulsory voting is that the voter realizes that he is not conferring a favour on the candidate but exercises his duty as the citizen. I advocated compulsory voting during the general debate on the Peoples Representation Bill in the Provisional Parliament in 1951. Dr Ambedkar who was piloting the Bill, while expressing sympathy for the idea, felt it might be a great burden. True, it might have been difficult in 1952 when we were introducing adult franchise for the first time but it should be no problem after more than fifty years of Independence. Compulsory voting has been in vogue in Australia for several years.

CONSTRUCTIVE VOTE

One immediate measure to reduce kaleidoscopic changes in government, which does not require any constitutional amendment or other elaborate changes, is to provide in the Rules of Procedure of the Lok Sabha that a Motion of No-confidence against the Ministry should in the same motion name the Prime Minister to succeed the present incumbent if the Motion was carried. This system, the constructive vote, prevails in Germany where there is a multi-party system. The motion for the removal of the Chancellor should name the successor in the motion itself so that if the motion was

carried, there would be another Chancellor already chosen by the House. The Constitution of India prescribes that the Council of Ministers shall be collectively responsible to the House of People. It is the Rules of Procedure which define the mode of removal of the Ministry.

FREE AND FAIR ELECTION

Democracy is a form of government by the people themselves through their chosen representatives. The choice is made periodically by holding elections. Unless the elections are free, fair and equitable, the democratic system will collapse. This was fully

Democracy is a form of government by the people themselves through their chosen representatives. The choice is made periodically by holding elections. Unless the elections are free, fair and equitable, the democratic system will collapse. This was fully realized by the country and the Representation of the People Act of 1950 and 1951 sought to provide for a free and fair elections.

realized by the country and the Representation of the People Act of 1950 and 1951 sought to provide for a free and fair elections. During the last fifty years, however, despicable developments have taken root in the Nation which have rendered elections almost a farce. Illegal and immoral methods are resorted to for winning elections. Money power, muscle power, corrupt and unfair practices are increasingly resorted to with impunity. Several other malpractices and improprieties of Political Parties in the collection and use of funds, bribery and misuse of authority plague our system. The cry for comprehensive electoral reforms has already reached a crescendo against forces threatening to disrupt our already anaemic democratic structure. I shall briefly put forth other major electoral reforms that need to be adopted without delay if we want to salvage the Parliamentary Form of Government for our Nation.

PARTY SYSTEM

Representative government presupposes the existence of political parties. One of the conventions of the British Constitution is that the Crown must call the leader of the majority party to form the government. Yet there was no law in the United Kingdom recognizing the political party until the passing of the Ministers of the Cabinet Act 1937 which defined the Leader of Opposition and granted him a salary. The Constitution of India recognised political parties in the Anti-defection Amendment to the Constitution. On the other hand, Art.21 of the Basic Law of Federal Republic of Germany (1949) which became the Constitution of Germany on reünification of the Federal Republic and the German Democratic Republic, provided as follows:

“Political parties shall participate in the formation of the political will of the people. They may be freely established. Their internal organization must conform to democratic

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principles: They must publicly account for their assets and for the sources and use of their funds. Details shall be regulated by Federal Laws."

On the same lines, legislation called Political Parties Registration and Regulation Act may be passed. The Act, inter-alia, may provide:

that every political party shall be open to all citizens of India without distinction of caste, creed, race, religion or gender and shall have a democratic constitution;

that the said constitution shall provide for a register of member;

that the executive of the party shall be elected at least once in two years;

that disciplinary action against any member shall be taken in accordance with the rules approved by the General Body of the Party; that there shall be a right of appeal to an internal body against any such decision;

that there shall be at least one General Body meeting

every year of the members of delegates elected according to prescribed procedure;

that true and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursement shall be maintained and the same shall be audited every year by a Chartered Accountant, and filed with the Election Commission within the date to be prescribed. Such audited statements shall be public documents and be open for inspection and for obtaining copies on payment of prescribed costs;

that political parties shall enforce discipline and decorum in the legislature and the misbehaving members shall be placed outside the whip (expelled from the party). A political party which fails to do so may be derecognised by the Presiding Officer of the House apart from any other action taken against the member himself; and

that political parties shall ensure that their members observe highest probity and integrity in the discharge of

their duties as members of the legislature. Members guilty of misconduct shall be debarred from being a member of any political party apart from any other action or actions taken according to law.

In 1978, the Income Tax Act was amended by inserting section 13A which provided that any income of a political party, inter alia, by way of voluntary contributions received by a political party from any person shall not be included in the total income of the previous year of such political party provided that such political party keeps and maintains such books of account and other documents as would enable the Assessing Officer to properly deduce its income therefrom;

In respect of such voluntary contributions in excess of ten thousand rupees, such political party keeps and maintains a record of such contributions and the name and address of the person who made such contribution; and

the accounts of such

political party are audited by an Accountant as defined in the Explanation below sub-section (2) of Section 288.

It is surprising that this section has remained a dead letter and the Income Tax Department of successive governments have been remiss in enforcing this revenue measure.

That even the Comptroller & Auditor General of India has not commented on the lapse of the Income Tax Department is surprising beyond measure.

In a Public Interest Litigation filed by Common Cause (A Registered Society) against the Union of India reported in (1996) 2 Supreme Court cases Page 752, the Supreme Court held at page 757

“That the political parties are under a statutory obligation to file a return of income in respect of each assessment year in accordance with the provisions of the Income Tax Act. The political parties reported to by us in the Judgment – who have not been filing returns of income for

several years, have prima facie violated the statutory provisions of the Income Tax Act as indicated by us in the Judgment.

That the Income Tax Authorities have been wholly remiss in the performance of their statutory duties under law. The said

authorities have for a long period failed to take appropriate action against defaulter political parties”.

Of what use is Law if it is not enforced?

ELECTION EXPENSES

It is notorious that the ceilings on election expenditure fixed by law to the state and central legislatures are more honoured in the breach than in the observance. Today election expenses for a Parliamentary Constituency soar above a crore of rupees and the State Assembly half that amount. This is clearly a nefarious method of depriving an honest and

It is notorious that the ceilings on election expenditure fixed by law to the state and central legislatures are more honoured in the breach than in the observance. Today election expenses for a Parliamentary Constituency soar above a crore of rupees and the State Assembly half that amount.

desirable candidate from entering the legislature. With an economy which is financed predominantly by money circulating outside the banking system (Black money), the statutory controls over ceilings on election expenditures have become a mockery. Lavish expenditure on cut outs, decorations, attractive posters, processions with music and drum entertainments like dance or other shows preceding or following election meetings, supply of eatables and drinks directly and indirectly through friends and relatives, bribery of voters with money or things

In a Parliamentary Democracy, the electorate has to choose a party whose policy and programme it approves. Therefore, any expenditure by a candidate on anything other than propaganda for its policies and programmes may be declared corrupt practice and the election of a candidate who engages in anything else except those permitted activities shall be set aside.

in kind are but a few of the items of extravagant election expenditure.

In a Parliamentary Democracy, the electorate has to choose a party whose policy and programme it approves. Therefore, any expenditure by a candidate on anything other than propaganda for its policies and programmes may be declared corrupt practice and the election of a candidate who engages in anything else except those permitted activities shall be set aside.

The valid expenditure for an election shall be the following:

Holding meetings;

Printing manifestoes or brochures;

Meeting people collectively or individually;

Employing volunteers and workers for distribution of literature, voting slips containing the name, number and the polling booth etc.

Employing polling agents in polling booths.

If these conditions are strictly enforced, the astronomical expenditure can be cut down drastically and an honest candidate may have a chance.

Seeking votes with false promises of free food, free clothing etc. or by fabulous

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advertisements and music, and dance shows really amounts to cheating the electorate and stealing their precious rights.

At present, the expenditure by a

political party is not included in the total election expenditure of the candidate. The Supreme Court in the case of Gupta Vs. Chawla held that expenses incurred by the political party in favour of a candidate should be treated as expenses authorised by the candidate and be subject to the ceiling laws.

This decision sought to ensure that candidates and parties are placed on an equal footing and also sought to prevent big money having an advantage in elections. But the Parliament promptly amended the Representation of People Act and excluded expenditure by political parties from the expenditure ceiling of the

The Supreme Court in the case of Gupta Vs. Chawla held that expenses incurred by the political party in favour of a candidate should be treated as expenses authorised by the candidate and be subject to the ceiling laws.

candidates. In order to ensure a measure of equity among the contesting candidates and also prevent extravagant expenditure on election, the amendment to Representation of People Act needs to be repealed. The Law Commission has also recommended the same.

Corporate funding of political parties shall be regulated by Company Law. Such funding shall be separately approved by the shareholders at the Annual General Meeting. Besides, no funds shall be provided to any political party which has been de-recognized by the Election Commission.

(To be contd.)

Voice of Freedom

Dr. B. S. Moonje (1872-1948)



It is one of the ironic twists in history that some of the great patriots of the pre-Gandhian era, who could not see eye-to-eye with Gandhiji and who were inclined to assert the rebellious rather than the quiescent spirit of the Hindu, were almost pushed to the background in free India. Dr. Balakrishna Shivaram Moonje, a Tilakite to begin with and an ardent Mahasabha leader later in his life, is one such person. Dr. Moonje, who was a prominent figure in Nagpur, formed in 1937 the Hindu Military Education Society and started a school called the Bhonsala Military School at Nashik as a feeder to the Dehra Dun Military Academy. "He received the popular title '*Dharma Vir*' for his religious activities and was nicknamed '*Field Marshal Moonje*' for his military qualities". (G.V. Ketkar) Qualified in medicine, Dr. Moonje had a reputation as an eye specialist.

He served in the army during the Boer War in South Africa and came in contact with Gandhiji.

He was in the Congress before the Extremists broke away from the Moderates (the Surat Split) in 1907 at the Surat session. He fully supported Tilak in organising the Shivaji and the Ganapati festivals. He opened a Swadeshi shop in Nagpur. He was convicted twice for participation in the Satyagraha. He was a member of the Central Legislative Assembly in the late twenties and resigned from it in 1930. He was elected President of the Hindu Mahasabha in 1926. He attended the first Round Table Conference and urged Indianisation of the army.

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Voice of Freedom

K. Venkataswami Naidu (1896-1972)

A familiar figure in coat and laced turban in the fifties of the last century, as a Minister in Rajaji's cabinet of 1952-1954, was K. Venkataswami Naidu. Hailing from a pious family in the Vaishnavite tradition, Shri Naidu was deeply religious. Perhaps, in keeping with his religious bent of mind, he held the portfolio of 'Hindu Religious Endowments'. A lawyer, he was drawn into politics in the thirties. He joined the Congress in 1936 and got into the Madras Legislative Council in 1937. He was elected Deputy President of the Legislative Council and held the office till 1952. He participated in the individual Satyagraha in 1940 and was sentenced to six

months' imprisonment.

Shri Venkataswami Naidu edited a religious monthly called 'Darshan'. He was a great believer in Gandhiji's Constructive Programme. He was against caste discrimination and untouchability. He favoured Gandhiji's basic education scheme.

Apart from successfully conducting his business in medicines and Governmental work, Shri Naidu took deep interest in the Scout Movement. He was Chief Commissioner of Scouts for over ten years. He was also involved in rural service camps and summer schools. He symbolised patriotism and piety.

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Voice of Freedom

Santosh Mitra (1901-1931)

Within a short life-span of 30 years, Santosh Mitra won popular acclaim as a great revolutionary.

The revolutionaries of the early decades of the last century broadly fell into two categories. One group believed in winning freedom with the help of Indian soldiers in the army and of foreign countries inimical to Britain. The second group chose the path of dacoity and murder of officials so that Government could be paralysed. Santosh Mitra belong to the latter group and got himself involved in revolutionary activities under the leadership of Barindra-Kumar Ghosh, younger brother of Sri Aurobindo Ghosh.

Santosh Mitra was a brilliant student and took his

M.A. and Law Degrees. He was drawn into the Non-Cooperation Movement. He was charged with murder in two cases but, thanks to the defence of the famous lawyer Jatindra Mohan Sengupta, he was acquitted. He was, however, detained under a special Government Ordinance promulgated to tackle terrorism. While under detention, there was a riot in the campus. He was fatally wounded on Sept. 16, 1931, when the rioters were fired upon. Rabindranath Tagore and Netaji Subhashchandra Bose were among those who paid glowing tributes to him on his cremation in Calcutta. His firm resolve to die for the cause of the country remained unshaken till the end of his life.

Voice of Freedom

Jatindra Nath Das (1904-1929)

Born in a middle class family of North Calcutta, Jatin, as a student, was very promising. Inspired by the prevailing political atmosphere he joined the Non-Cooperation movement and was sentenced to six months' imprisonment for picketing. Later he became a member of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee. Already in touch with the revolutionary movement, Jatin was arrested in 1925. On his release in October 1928 he played a prominent role in the Volunteer Corps, organised during the Congress session in Calcutta. Jatin's contact with the

revolutionaries of North India began at this stage and he started manufacturing high explosive bombs for the party. In June 1929 Jatin was arrested in a Supplementary Lahore Conspiracy Case. In protest against the brutal treatment of political under-trials and prisoners and to enforce a distinct class for them, Jatin-along with his comrades-resorted to hunger strike in Lahore Borstal Jail on July 13, 1929. He was removed to the hospital and died there after 63 days of heroic struggle. Jatindra Nath's martyrdom was symbolic of the spirit of revolutionary young India.

DR. N.B. KHARE

In the 'Bhavan's Journal' issue of June 30, 2000, in the series 'Voice of Freedom', what should have been Dr. N.B. Khare was wrongly given as Dr. B.N. Khare. The full name is Narayan Bhaskar Khare and not as printed.

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In Memoriam

Rashtrabandhu S. Nijalingappa

In the death of Shri S. Nijalingappa on Aug 8, 2000 at Chitradurg, the country has lost an outstanding patriot, Karnataka, one of its architects, and the Bhavan, a friend, philosopher and guide.

Shri Siddavanahalli Nijalingappa's end came a few weeks after he had been admitted to hospital for

treatment of a leg-fracture he sustained as a result of a fall. He was 98.

A little more than a year ago, Shri Nijalingappa was honoured with the titles, 'Karnataka Ratna' and 'Rashtrabandhu'.

In what perhaps was his last article that he wrote for 'Bhavan's Journal' under the



Shri S. Ramakrishnan, Executive Secretary and Director General of the 'Bhavan' and Shri Mathoor Krishnamoorthy, Executive Director of the Bhavan's Bangalore Kendra, presenting the citation to Shri Nijalingappa as a token of the conferment of the Honorary Membership of the Bhavan.

title 'What
Life Has
Taught Me',
S h r i
Nijalingappa
stated his
philosophy
of life as
"Love All

As an ardent Gandhian and
staunch Congressman, Shri
Nijalingappa rose from
leadership at the district level in
1936 to national leadership of the
Congress in 1968.

and serve
t h e
country".

As
an ardent
Gandhian
and staunch
Congressman,
S h r i

and Hate None". For one who
had such a cheerful outlook on
life, the conditions in his
country, as he looked around
him, gave little satisfaction. He
expressed his anguish in his last
article thus: "Looking around
me, I find corruption,
dishonesty and cheating. My
experience after freedom was
one of partial satisfaction for
about 20 years, during the
periods of Pandit Nehru and Lal
Bahadur Shastri. After their
passing, extreme selfishness
and fascination for power and
determination to continue in
power have resulted in
corruption in public life and
degradation in administration.
That has resulted in no
accountability and neglect of
duty".

Shri Nijalingappa had for
his motto, "Face the world
with a smile and never frown
at anyone. That is the best
way to solve one's problems

Nijalingappa rose from
leadership at the district level
in 1936 to national leadership
of the Congress in 1968. As
President of the Congress, he
had an uneasy time, coming in
conflict with an ambitious and
self-willed Prime Minister.
The strained relationship
between the heads of the party
and the Government led to a
split of the Congress in 1969.
This was an unpleasant chapter
in the life of Shri Nijalingappa
who had otherwise a glorious
record of service as the Chief
Minister of Mysore. He was the
first Chief Minister of the State
under the States Reorganisation
Act—November, 1956 to April,
1958. After a break of four
years, he took over again as the
Chief Minister in 1962 and
continued in office for six years
till 1968, when he became
President of the Congress. Shri
Nijalingappa initiated many
useful projects connected with

agriculture and industry. He was associated with the Cauvery Water Scheme in 1966; the Sharavati Project in 1967; the Hassan-Mangalore rail line; the irrigation projects of Gataprabha, Malaprabha and the Krishna. In the industrial field, his name is linked with projects for the manufacture of fertilizers,

s u g a r ,
cement and
aluminium.

Born the youngest of three children to poor parents of peasant

stock, he lost his father while barely three years of age. He then came under the fostering care of his uncle. His sense of gratefulness to his uncle was so great that he adopted the name of the latter's village Siddavanahalli.

After completing his school education at Chitradurga, Shri Nijalingappa pursued his college education at the Central College, Bangalore, where he won a free scholarship and got free boarding.

Graduating in 1924, he

participated, as a humble volunteer, in the Belgaum Congress Session over which Gandhiji presided. He took his law degree from the Poona Law College and started practice at Chitradurga in 1927. He then married Smt. Murigemma, from a wealthy family of Davanagere.

Shri Nijalingappa's political career started in 1931 when he took a leading part in the merger of the political parties of Mysore leading to the emergence of the Mysore Congress Party.

S h r i
Nijalingappa's
political
career
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he took a
leading part
in the

merger of the political parties of Mysore leading to the emergence of the Mysore Congress Party. He participated in the famous Mysore Flag Satyagraha. Elected unopposed to the Mysore Legislative Council, he resigned his seat in protest against the repressive Government measures against the Congress party.

Chosen to lead the Forest Satyagraha in the Chitradurga district, he courted arrest and was awarded an 18-month prison term. Although released

in 1940, his legal practice was barred and this deprived him of his means of livelihood. Undaunted, he cheerfully took to constructive activities and became very popular.

The "Quit India" movement again saw him in prison. On release, he was elected President of the Mysore Pradesh Congress Committee and in 1946, President of Karnataka P.C.C. which post he held for a record term of eight years, during which he worked

hard for the unification of Karnataka. In 1946, he was elected to the Constituent Assembly from Bombay and appointed a Member of the Congress Working Committee.

Shri Nijalingappa was the first Chairman of Bhavan's Bangalore Kendra. The Honorary Membership of the Bhavan was conferred on him in June, 1999, at his residence at Chitradurg.

- S. R.

□□□

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USHABEHN MEHTA

True *Bharatiya* Woman & *Swatantra Yogini*

□ S.RAMAKRISHNAN

Ushabehn, who passed away in Mumbai on Aug. 11, 2000, was the embodiment of the Gandhian ideal: perfect accord of thought, word and deed.

In everything she did, she never sought any kind of personal recognition and worked only for the people and the country. I have not known a time when she wasn't fearless and conscientious.

She was barely eight years old in 1928 when she came under Gandhiji's magic spell and joined the freedom movement, protesting against the Simon Commission in Bombay with

stalwart leaders such as Morarji Desai, Balasaheb Kher, K.V.Nariman, and others. By 1932, selfless Ushabehn had already earned the title of *Swatantra Yogini* and *Satyagrahi*.

I first met Ushabehn at the August Kranti Maidan in August 1942 when the Quit India movement was launched.

She was completely devoted to selling khadi, spinning yarn on the *charkha* and working for the 'Hindi Prachar' programme of Gandhiji. When the British government arrested all the major leaders of the Quit India movement, there



Gandhiji and the Gandhian

was no one left to carry on Gandhiji's message of peaceful protest. Ushabehn took up the responsibility of broadcasting Gandhiji's gospel through the underground radio-Radio Congress. No



Dr. Usha Mehta with
Shri Nani Palkhivala (Centre)
and S. Ramakrishnan

one knew from where the independence, anti-British propaganda was being aired. Ushabehn kept changing the radio's headquarters. In fact, she had to be so mobile that at times the succeeding broadcast took place miles away from the previous one. British government only knew that Radio Congress was operating from somewhere in Bombay. They took more than three months to find out her whereabouts.

And when they finally did, more than 150 Indian policemen were sent to arrest her. When they barged into her temporary hideout, *Vande Mantram*, was being aired. Ushabehn dared

them to stop the broadcast.

They kept their rifles aside and stood at attention till *Vande Mantram* was over. After that they arrested her. Eminent lawyers including Dr. K.M. Munshi

appeared for her. In the jail, she came in contact with the Sardar who took care of her health. But she was convicted and sentenced to imprisonment for four years—from 1942-46—in the Yeravada jail.

From 1928 till her last day, Ushabehn never stopped spreading Gandhiji's philosophy. On August 7, the former President of India, R. Venkataraman released her latest book, 'Mahatma Gandhi and Humanism'. In my opinion, the book not only reflects the genuine academician in her but also the true Gandhian.

Through 12 comparative essays she has studied Gandhiji vis-à-vis various world leaders.

USHABEHN MEHTA A TRUE BHARATIYA WOMAN

and thinkers who influenced him, were influenced by him, and who were opposed to him such as Dr. B.R.Ambedkar. The end-result is a testimony to her sparkling scholarship and total sincerity.

Ushabehn took her B A (Hons) degree in 1939 from Bombay University and LLB in 1941. She completed her PhD in 1953 on "The Social and Political Thought of Mahatma Gandhi". She was also a Fulbright Scholar in 1953-54. After the 1950s she worked as Research Assistant, Lecturer, Reader and Professor and Head of the Department of Civics and Politics of the University of Bombay. She retired from the University in 1980. It is said of her that had she taken to politics, she would have brought high idealism to the craft of politics.

Ushabehn was closely associated with the Bhavan and



Bharat Ratna and Padma awardees of the Bhavan's family along with the Governor of Maharashtra. (L to R) S.Ramakrishnan, K.R.Atmanathan (deputizing Bharat Ratna Smt. M.S.Subbulakshmi), H.K.Dua, Dr. P.C.Alexander (Governor of Maharashtra) C.Subramaniam, Nani Palkhivala and Usha Mehta (1998).

she was one of the General Secretaries of **Sadachar Bharati**, a joint venture of the Bhavan and the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi. Constituted in 1996 on the occasion of Gandhiji's 125th Birth Anniversary, its main objective was promotion of values and purity in public life and Rural Regeneration.

She has authored several books (jointly) on Gandhiji and held various positions in government bodies and educational and cultural institutions.

Till her last day she was

USHABEHN MEHTA A TRUE BHARATIYA WOMAN

President of the Bombay Gandhi Smarak Nidhi and the Mani Bhavan Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya.

Ushabehn was a true 'Bharatiya' woman who symbolised Indian culture. Always content with what she had, she will always be an inspiration to all of us.

Ushabehn's life of four score

and one was marked by sacrifice and suffering, patriotism and idealism, intellectual distinction and social service. She was that rare type of Gandhian who would not shirk from upholding any public cause that would help relieve the distress of the people, remove social evils and ensure fairplay and justice.

□□□

In Dr. Usha Mehta's demise, the nation has lost a versatile and veteran Gandhian. Her active participation in the "Quit India Movement" is legendary. She was an embodiment of Gandhian Values and she would always be remembered for spreading Gandhiji's message.

ATAL BEHARI VAJPAYEE
Prime Minister of India

It is with deepest shock that I received the news of the sad demise of Usha Behn. On the 7th of this month she participated in the release of her book, 'Mahatma Gandhi and Humanism' in Delhi and spoke vibrantly about Gandhiji. She was so fit and active that I could not believe that she would leave us so suddenly, just within the next three days!

Usha Behn was an example of devotion and dedication to the national cause. In her sincerity, honesty and austerity she matched Gandhiji himself. Gandhiji laid down severe and almost forbidding conditions for his Ashramites. He wanted the members of the Ashram to take vows of Satya, Ahimsa, Swadeshi, celibacy, fearlessness, moderation in food and elimination of untouchability. Usha Behn not only satisfied all the conditions but added something more, namely intellectual eminence.

She was one of the stalwarts of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan family and sustained its activities in every direction.

The nation has lost an eminent Gandhian and a dedicated social worker.

R. VENKATARAMAN
Former President of India

One of the last surviving heroes of the Gandhian Revolution has now passed into history. For Dr. Usha Mehta the revolution did not stop with the attainment of freedom. Many battles remained for her to be fought and won like the empowerment of women, upliftment of the disadvantaged classes in society, elimination of communalism and promotion of integrity in public life. She continued her fight against all forms of injustice and social evils till the last breath of her life with the same zeal and commitment she had shown as a young woman when she organised the underground movement against the British Rule during the 'Quite India' struggle.

For the people of Mumbai the demise of Ushaben is indeed an irreparable loss. We will badly miss the eloquence and powerful voice of that frail person in support of all good causes in Mumbai. But her life and mission will always remain a source of inspiration for the people of Mumbai who have always held her in the highest esteem and looked up to her with great faith for guidance and leadership.

Dr. P.C. Alexander
Governor of Maharashtra.

Usha Mehta who died unexpectedly was a remarkable woman. Small in stature but possessing enormous energy, self-effacing yet fiercely independent and endowed with an indomitable will-power, she led a simple life devoted to the service of her fellowmen. She was a source of immense strength to those privileged to know her, and transformed the lives of many of them. She loved India and was deeply worried about the increasing communalisation and cynicism of its political life. A great freedom fighter, she repeatedly complained about the decline in our standards of public morality. Like her hero Mahatma Gandhi, she was not given to defeatism. During the last few years of her life, she summoned up enormous reserves of energy and strove to arrest that decline. Her death breaks one great link with our past and deprives us of one great source of national regeneration. For my part she was not only one of the finest teachers and devoted friends I had but also a constant source of inspiration. Although she has died, she will continue to live on in the minds and memories of all of us.

Lord Bhikhu Parekh
Hull, U.K.

SHYAMA PRASAD'S EFFORTS FOR INDIA- BRITISH SETTLEMENT

□ K. M. MUNSHI

With the Congress out of the way*, the Muslim League and the Hindu Mahasabha gained in importance. The Mahasabha set up a Committee, headed by my friend, Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee, 'to make a final effort for an Indo-British settlement on honourable terms'.

In my Akhand Hindustan Campaign, I had toured throughout North India, contacting Congressmen as well as non-Congressmen and saw for myself how the Pakistan riots were intended to make partition inevitable. Non-Congressmen. I found, had only one way of counter-acting the Muslim League and that was to

blame Gandhiji and the Congress for strengthening Jinnah's hold over the Muslims.

In the course of my tour, when in Delhi, Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee met me. He told me of an interview he had had with Jinnah, who had suggested that the Hindus should agree to the partition of India in principle. On such an agreement, he would join the Hindus in pressing for the transfer of power to Indian hands. At the same time, as was his habit, he had warned Shyama Prasad that, if the assurance given by him was published, he would disown it.

Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, the leader of the Hindu

* Arrest of Gandhiji and other prominent leaders in the wake of Quit India Movement.

SHYAMA PRASAD'S EFFORTS FOR INDIA-BRITISH SETTLEMENT

Mahasabha, invited me to meet its Working Committee at Delhi and give a survey of the situation as I found it during my Akhand Hindustan tour. I told the Working Committee what I had seen: that the Hindus were extremely agitated over the Pakistan riots; that many Congressmen felt that violent resistance should be offered; that Gandhiji and the Congress leadership were not going to support such a course; and that, if the challenge of Muslim violence was to be accepted, a non-Gandhian leadership with a mass appeal had to be found, which did not exist in the country, to exorcise the Muslim League of its 'master' race' complex. I felt that Savarkar was not happy at having invited me.

Shyama Prasad was keen that we should draw up some compromise formula. I have not been able to trace a copy of it in my collection of papers, but I remember that one of the noteworthy features of the scheme that we evolved provided for an Arbitration

Council to decide on inter-unit differences. I had, however, pointed out to Shyama Prasad that there would be no sanction behind the decision of such a tribunal.

I think it was at this time that I received from Shyama Prasad a copy of the proposals stated to have been given by a leading Muslim Leaguer as a result of the talks between him and Jinnah.*

The proposals were :

The leader of the Muslim League endorsed the national demand for freedom as adumbrated in the last resolution of the Working Committee of the All India Hindu Mahasabha and expressed the League's readiness to join other parties to fight for and win freedom immediately, provided a settlement was reached with the Muslim League. The League would co-operate in the formation of composite Provisional Governments on the basis of representation in the Cabinet according to population both at the Centre and in the Provinces. The allotment of

particular portfolios would not be made a condition of forming such Cabinets.

The broad principles to be agreed to were that, after the War--

(a) A commission shall be appointed to mark out contiguous areas in the north-west and north-east of India where the Muslim population numbers 65 p.c. or above.

(b) In these two areas there shall be a universal plebiscite and, if the majority of the population vote in favour of a separate sovereign State, such a State shall be formed.

(c) In the event of separation, the Muslims shall not demand any safeguard for the Muslim minority in Hindustan. It will be open to the 'two Indias' to arrange, on a reciprocal basis, safeguards for religious minorities in the respective States.

(d) There shall be no corridor between the two Muslim areas in the north-west and north-east of India, but the two areas shall constitute one sovereign State.

(e) Indian States shall be left

out of consideration.

To complete the picture of the time, I may also mention that Sikandar Hyat Khan, the Prime Minister of the Punjab, had a compromise formula of his own which Shyama Prasad and I discussed at great length.

A meeting of some non-Congress leaders was convened by Shyama Prasad, which I also attended, to consider the possibility of carrying on negotiations with Jinnah. Savarkar's voice prevailed. Shyama Prasad was asked not to pursue the matter further with Jinnah.

For reasons of my own, I thought Savarkar was right. To carry on negotiations with Jinnah, while the Congress leaders were in jail, would have only given him one more opportunity to give a spectacular rebuff to the Hindus.

During this time I kept myself in continuous touch with Gandhiji, explaining all that I did and said. Sometimes I was baffled by the crosscurrent of criticism that I encountered, and once wrote a long, explanatory

letter to Gandhiji about it.

Sorrowfully, I came to the conclusion, which I was ashamed to confess even to myself, that in a grim struggle involving violence, the Muslims had the advantage of a leadership which had a 'master-race' complex towards the Hindus. On the other hand, the Hindus were at a disadvantage because of their habit, developed during centuries of alien rule, of adopting a heroic attitude in words and then of manoeuvring themselves into safety by some clever device, or finding some moral justification for submitting to the disaster which was made inevitable by their own lack of will to resist.

I attended a rally of the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh which we, Congressmen, had looked upon as an 'unseeable' *pariah*. I was struck by the discipline, determination and the spirit of selflessness which characterized its members. It had no financial backing behind it and no leaders of all-India

fame to give it a status, and yet it functioned efficiently on an emotional bond.

I met M. S. Golwalkar, the Guruji of the R.S.S. Whatever our differences in political aims and methods, I could not help admiring the dedicated life he lived, his great power of organization and his skill in building up the R.S.S. at the time resisting the temptation to throw it into the vortex of politics.

* These terms have some similarity to those which Rajaji presented to Gandhiji later. Actually Raja Maheswar Dayal Seth, then the Secretary of the Hindu Mahasabha, has claimed that it was he who got the terms from Jinnah through a common friend who was an important member of the Muslim League. Later, according to Maheswar Dayal, Rajaji got the terms from him and had them approved by Gandhiji. In reply to my inquiry whether Maheswar Dayal's claim had any basis, Rajaji has categorically denied it. In a letter to me dated June, 17, 1966, Rajaji has stated: "...The memorandum I gave to Gandhiji during his fast in the Aga Khan Palace was my own and not what any one else gave me. The proposal were not given to me by Sri Maheswar Dayal.....The proposals

SHYAMA PRASAD'S EFFORTS FOR INIDA-BRITISH SETTLEMENT

I gave to Gandhiji were then and there written by me for him because he wanted it in writing so that he could understand them clearly. It might be the same or nearly the same as any other paper. It embodied my own formula and it was this which found acceptance from Gandhiji and which he afterwards discussed with Jinnah. It is not as Maheswar Dayal says-- 'I gave a copy of it to Rajaji as well, who showed it to Mahatmaji in March 1946'." [For Maheswar Dayal's statement see The Indian Annual Register (1944), Vol. II, pp. 60-61, quoted in Sir Maurice Gwyer

and A. Appadorai's Speeches and Documents on the Indian Constitution 1921-47; Vol.II. pp. 584-49 f.n.]. Jinnah denied having made the offer as stated by Maheswar Dayal. The terms which Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee gave me agree with those published by Maheswar Dayal except that in the terms published by the latter there was an additional clause, namely.

"f. A Government machinery shall be provided for giving due facilities for transfer of population, absolutely on a voluntary basis."

□ □ □

From Munshiji's "Pilgrimage to Freedom", a Bhavan's Publication.

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SHYAMA PRASAD MOOKERJEE: A PEERLESS PATRIOT

□ M.V. KAMATH

This year, AD 2000, happens to be the birth centenary year of a remarkable patriot, Shyama Prasad Mookerjee. That a West Bengal communist leader declined to attend the inauguration, in Calcutta, of Shyama Prasad's birth centenary celebrations at the hands of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, merely shows up the pettiness of a party that was hand-in-glove with the British in the forties when India was fighting for its freedom. The communist leader,

Buddhadeva Bhattacharya, declined to attend the inauguration ceremony on the ground that Shyama Prasad was a communalist. That for an alleged communalist Shyama Prasad did more for his suffering fellow countrymen during the infamous Bengal famine than all other political leaders of that time put together unfortunately has gone unrecorded. Which is a pity.

Shyama Prasad was born on July 6, 1901 in a family known for its eminence and scholarly accomplishments. His father, Sir Ashutosh



Mookherjee, an able jurist and educationist of repute – Calcutta University owes a great deal to him – was his model. His grandfather, Ganga Prasad Mookerjee, was even better known for his love of the country. Shyama Prasad was educated at Presidency College and Law College, Calcutta, was called to the Bar from Lincoln's Inn and, after returning to India, was closely associated with Calcutta University in many ways. He served two terms as its Vice-Chancellor starting in 1934 and is probably the youngest Vice-Chancellor the University ever had.

He first entered politics in 1929 and was elected to the Bengal Legislative Council as a Congress

candidate. In 1937 when the Bengal Legislature was first constituted on the basis of the Communal

Award, he was again returned to the Legislature from the

University Constituency. He became Bengal's Finance Minister during 1941-43 but decided to resign following the arrest and imprisonment of Congress leaders in 1942. In 1943 he was elected President of the All India Hindu Mahasabha.

There always was something fearless about Shyama Prasad. It was he, as Vice-Chancellor, who invited Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore to address University graduates during the 1938 convocation, in Bengali – which the poet did. In his own speech Shyama Prasad was to say, in the presence of the British Chancellor, Lord Brabourne that Indian University education "has merely ensured

a regular supply of an indigenous machinery for the smooth working of a powerful bureaucracy".

He first entered politics in 1929 and was elected to the Bengal Legislative Council as a Congress candidate.

It required courage to be so forthright in the very presence

of the British Governor.

He had courage, too, to resign from the Ministry of Fazlul Haq three months after the Quit India Movement had begun on Aug. 9, 1942. Three days after his resignation Shyama prasad issued a strong statement. It said: "The constitution that functions under the so-called system of provincial autonomy is a colossal mockery. Bengal must rise to a man and demand the end of arbitrary rule forced on the province by a thoughtless and reactionary administration". And this when all leading Congressmen were in jail! At the height of the Bengal famine during which period some three to five million Bengalis died of starvation, it was Shyama prasad who had the courage to tell the Bengal Legislature, quoting facts and figures, that it was a man-made famine and that the British Government was responsible for it. The government, he charged, was stocking huge quantities of rice for the consumption of British

forces in India. In his foreword to Shyama Prasad's Educational Speeches (1959), Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan was to write: "The dynamic forcefulness of his personality made a lasting impression on all those who came into contact with him". Shyama Prasad, however, was not interested in making political capital out of the ravages that the famine had wrought in Bengal. The relief works that he organised remains identified only with him as the leader of the Hindu Mahasabha. The reports of his speeches in the Bengal Assembly made Nehru, then in jail, say that before Shyama Prasad, others appeared like pygmies. The British Government's report admitted that in famine relief "official Congress did little" and "Hindu Mahasabha, much". But then one must remember that Congress leaders were then in jail. It was Arthur Moore, the then British editor of The Statesman who, in his public appeal for cooperation, claimed that "he is perhaps the one man who is

working for the relief of the distress without sparing himself the least bit".

Shyama Prasad was no communalist at any time. Never. The story goes that when, as president of the Hindu Mahasabha, he called on Mahatma Gandhi, the latter said: "Somebody is needed to lead the Hindus after Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya". Replied Shyama Prasad: "But then you will dub me as communal!" To that, the Mahatma is reported to have said: "Like Shiva who drank the poison after the churning of the sea, somebody must be there to drink the poison of

Indian politics. Perhaps it can be you". Tribute has been paid to Shyama Prasad by one of his friends

of that time, K.M. Munshi who, during the forties, was fighting for Akhand (United) Hindustan.

With Congressmen in jail, it was left to the Hindu Mahasabha to handle the Muslim League of M. A. Jinnah. In his book *Pilgrimage to Freedom*, Munshi has recorded the then stand of the Muslim League. The League, then, was willing to cooperate in the formation of a composite Provisional Government in Delhi on the basis of representation in the Cabinet according to population. The principles agreed to by the League were as follows. Once the war was over:

A commission shall be appointed to mark out contiguous areas in the north-

"Like Shiva who drank the poison after the churning of the sea, somebody must be there to drink the poison of Indian politics. Perhaps it can be you".

Gandhiji to Shyama Prasad

west and north-east of India where the Muslim population numbered 65 per cent or more.

In those two areas there shall be a universal plebiscite and, if the majority of the population vote in favour

of a separate sovereign state, such a State shall be formed.

In the event of separation, the Muslims shall not demand any safeguard for the Muslim minority in Hindustan. It will be open to the 'two Indias' to arrange, on a reciprocal basis, safeguards for religious minorities in the respective states.

There shall be no corridor between the two Muslim areas in the north-east and north-west of India but the two areas shall constitute one sovereign state.

Indian states shall be left out of consideration.

Munshi states that a meeting of some non-Congress leaders had been convened by Shyama Prasad to consider the possibility of carrying on negotiations with Jinnah, but Vir Savarkar's "voice

prevailed" and "Shyama Prasad was asked not to pursue the matter further with Jinnah". One wonders what might have happened if that meeting had taken place.

Partition did take place amidst a lot of slaughter which Shyama Prasad would have greatly liked to avert. At Gandhiji's suggestion, he agreed to join the first Nehru cabinet in Independent India and was appointed Minister for Industries and Supplies. Unable to fulfil what he thought were his responsibilities towards the refugees, he resigned and was to become the first member to sit in Opposition in Parliament. He also resigned from the Hindu Mahasabha in order to fight for a casteless society and founded the Bharatiya Jan Sangh in

Partition did take place amidst a lot of slaughter which Shyama Prasad would have greatly liked to avert. At Gandhiji's suggestion, he agreed to join the first Nehru cabinet in Independent India and was appointed Minister for Industries and Supplies.

October 1951. At that time, if one remembers aright, his secretary was a young man called Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

At the height of political disturbances in Jammu & Kashmir, Shyama Prasad decided to visit Jammu in May 1953 to make an on-the-spot study of the situation there. It appears that he had been warned not to go to Jammu by some leaders, including Sucheta Kripalani. Shyama Prasad ignored their warning. He was arrested and jailed and died in prison in Srinagar on June 23, 1953. He was then hardly 52 years old.

It has been suggested in some quarters that this was not a natural death but a "medical murder". Before his fateful visit to Jammu Shyama Prasad had written to Nehru appealing to him to restrain Sheikh Abdullah and desist turning Jammu & Kashmir virtually into an independent republic with a separate flag, a separate Constitution and a separate President. Nehru would not

oblige. What followed is history.

Though Shyama Prasad is known primarily as politician, his role as an educationist has not been of a lesser order. It was he in Bengal who revised the Matriculation Regulations in 1935 and got them passed 23 years after they were first mooted, in 1922. It was he as member of the University Senate who was instrumental in introducing a number of significant amendments, one of them relating to the making of Bengali as the medium of instruction in all subjects other than, of course, English. It was again, he who took a leading role in the creation of Board of Secondary Education which would be responsible for the whole of Bengal. It was also he who consolidated the central library of the University and streamlined its various collections.

Bengal – and the whole of India – owes him a deep debt of gratitude. He was a patriot without a peer.

Devaki Krishna Temple in Goa

□ K. PANDURANG P. KAMATH

The temple of Sri Devaki Krishna at Mahashel (Mahashaila) in Ponda taluka of Goa is, perhaps, the only temple of its kind in India. Child Krishna in the arms of mother Devaki is the principal deity and Balakrishna is the utsavamurti of the temple.

Sahyadri Kanda in Skanda Purana deals with temples and sacred places of the Konkan. The Kanda is so called because it deals with the greatness and sanctity of temples and sacred places in the coastal belt of this region, adjacent to Sahyadri Mountain. In

Sahyadri Kanda, we also find the legend of the creation of Sri Parashurama Kshetra. The temples of Konkan are an important part of the spiritual and social life of the people.

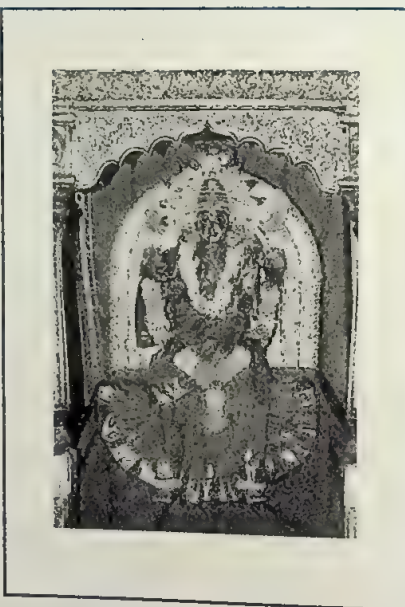
Sri Devaki Krishna is also the family deity of its "Mahajans" spread all over India, most of whom live in

Goa, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Kerala. For devotees of Sri Devaki Krishna, Devaki is the embodiment of the Mother Goddess, giving Her benediction to Her devotees. Child Krishna, of course, the incarnation of



DEVAKI KRISHNA TEMPLE IN GOA

L o r d
Mahavishnu, is
ever ready to
protect His
devotees. Sri
Krishna is also
known as
B h a k t a
V a t s a l a ,
a l w a y s
affectionate to
His devotees,
and remains the
Darling of
Humanity. If
He is loved as a
child, He is also



Sri Krishna
had already
defeated
Jarasandha.
The victorious
Sri Krishna
met His
mother Devaki
at Chodana
(Chudamani)
village. To
make His
mother happy,
He took the
form of
Balakrishna
and sat at her

hailed as Lord of the universe.

According to Harivamsha Purana (A supplement to Mahabharata), Sri Krishna had prolonged, repeated wars with His enemy Jarasandha. On the occasion of His 18th war with Jarasandha, which took place at the foot of the mountains in Konkan region (Goa area), Jarasandha got Kalayavana to assist him in the war. Hearing this Devaki, mother of Sri Krishna, got worried about Sri Krishna's safety and came in search of her son. By this time

waist. This is the idol at Sri Devaki Krishna Temple - Devaki holding her child Krishna.

During the period of Portuguese rule (AD 1510 to 1961) in Goa, the devotees of Sri Krishna shifted all temples of Chodana village, including the main temple of Sri Devaki Krishna, to Mahashel (Mahashaila) and rebuilt the new Devaki Krishna temple complex (Also known as Devaki Krishna Samsthan). The remains of the temples at

DEVAKI KRISHNA TEMPLE IN GOA

Chodana village can be seen even to-day. (More about this can be found in Dev Bhumi Gomantak and Sri Devaki Krishna Samsthan Itihas – written by Sri Vinayak Narayan Shenvi Dhume.)

Sri Devaki Krishna Samsthan is unique in some respects. The Principal Deity Devaki Krishna has no separate Mahajan. The Mahajans of all affiliated temples (Deities) are deemed to be Mahajans of the Principal Deity Devaki Krishna and Devi Bhumika.

Sri Devaki Krishna Samsthan consists of temples with the following deities: -

Principal Common Deity: Sri Devaki Krishna. (1) Sri Devi Bhumika (2) Sri Laxmi Ravalnath (Pandavada) (3) Sri Laxmi Ravalnath – Gavanvada (4) Sri Mallinath (5) Sri Dada

Shankar (6) Sri Laxmi Narayan (7) Sri Katyayani (8) Sri Mahadeva (9) Sri Chodneshwara.

The temples of Sri Devaki Krishna and others are built in the traditional style. Several festivals celebrated at these temples, such as Pratishta Vardanti, Ananth Vrita, Navaratri, Kartika Poornima, Sri Rama Navami. The annual Rathosava, Pausha Poornima, Sri Krishna Janmasthami are most popular. The Shatachandi-Vishnuyaga Anusthan was performed on May 6 to 8, 1995 with the guidance and in the august presence of H.H. Shrimad Vidyadhiraj Thirtha Swami Vader of Gokarn Partagal Math of Sri Devaki Krishna Samsthan.

□□□

“Aryan Cult originated in India and spread throughout the country and abroad. Its followers were called Aryans. There was no Aryan race” says L.N. Renu in *Indian Ancestors of Vedic Aryans* published by Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.

VALMIKI RAMAYANA

Uttarakanda



नारायण न जानीषे क्षत्रिधर्म पुरातनम् ।
अयुद्धमनसो भीतानस्मान् हंसि यथेतरः ॥
पराङ्मुखवधं पापं यः करोत्यसुरेतरः ।
स हन्ता न गतः स्वर्गं लभते पुण्यकर्मणाम् ॥
युद्धश्रद्धाऽथवा तेऽस्ति शङ्खचक्रगदाधरः ।
अहं स्थितोऽस्मि पश्यामि बलं दर्शय यत्तव ॥

*Narayana, Na Jaaneshe Kshattriyadharman Puraatanam
Ayuddhamanaso Bheetaanasmaan Hamsi Yathetarah
Paraangmukhavadham Paapam Yah Karotyasuretarah
Sa Hantaa Na Gatah Svargam Labhate Punyakarmanam
Yuddhashraddhaathavaa Teasti Shankachakragadhaadharah
Aham Sthito-asmi Pasyaami Balam Darsaya Yattava*

"You do not evidently know the ancient (Primordial) Law of the Kshattriya, O Narayana, since like any of the common run, you attack us who are disinclined to fight, being frightened. He who sins by killing him whose back is turned on him, O chief of the gods, does not go to heaven, the meed of those who do meritorious deeds. But if it is zest for fighting that drives you, here I am, let us see what you can do, O wearer of the conch, the discus and the mace."

माल्यवन्तं स्थितं दृष्ट्वा माल्यवन्तमिवाचलम् ।

उवाच राक्षसेन्द्रं तं देवराजानुजो बली ॥

युष्मत्तो भयभीतानां देवानां वै यथाभयम् ।

राक्षसोत्सादनं दत्तं तदेतदनुपाल्यते ॥

प्राणैरपि प्रियं कार्यं देवानां हि सदा मया ।

सोऽहं वो हनिष्यामि रसातलगतानपि ॥

*Maalyvantam Sithitam Dhrishtvaa Maalyavantamivaachalam
Uvaacha Raakshasendram Tam Devaraajaanujo Bali
Yushmatto Bhayabheetaanaam Devaanaam Vai Yathaabhayam
Raakshasotsaadanam Dattam Tadetadanupaalyate
Praanairapi Priyam Kaaryam Devaanaam Hi Sadaa Mayaa
Soham Vo Hanishyaami Rasaatalagataanapi*

When he saw that Maalyavaan stood his ground like the mountain Maalyavaan itself, the strong younger brother of the King of the gods retorted. "I promised protection to the gods, who went in fear of you, and promised them to exterminate the Raakshasaas; that I am fulfilling. I must ever do the pleasure of the gods, even at the risk of my life. So I shall slay you even if you go to Rasaatala."

देवदेवं ब्रुवाणं तं रक्ताम्बुरुहलोचनम् ।

शक्त्या बिभेद संक्रुद्धो राक्षसेन्द्रो भुजान्तरे ॥

माल्यवद्भुजनिर्मुक्ता शक्तिर्घण्टाकृतस्वना ।

हरेरुरसि बभ्राज मेघस्येव य शतहृदा ॥

*Devadevam Bruvaanam Tam Raktaamburuhalochanam
Shaktyaa Bibheda Samkruddho Raakshasendro Bhujaantare
Maalvadbhujanirmuktaa Shaktirghantaakritasvanaa
Harerurasi Babhraaja Meghasyeva Ya Shathrudaa*
Enraged by what the God of gods, whose eyes are like the red lotus, said, the king of the Asuras pierced Him in the chest with his javelin. That javelin, with its bells clanging, thrown by Maalyavaan, shone on Hari's breast, like lightning playing on a cloud.

Darbari Seth: Role Model for Indian Youth

□ M.R.PAI*

Darbari Seth, who died in London on 8th December, 1999, a few days short of his 80th birthday, was a God's own good man. A man with a 24-carat golden heart, he packed in 80 years of life varied achievements, and died the way he wanted to quit this world, literally on his feet, and active till the very end. Darbari Seth had once said: "I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work the more I love.

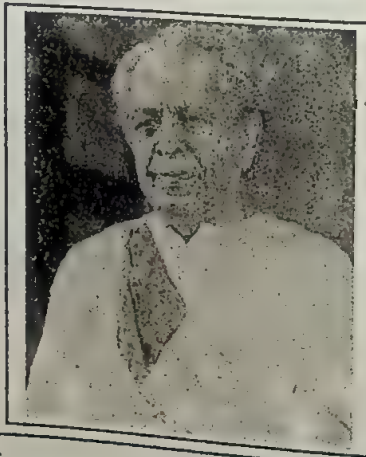
I rejoice in life for its own sake. Life is no brief candle to me; it is a sort of splendid torch which I have got a hold of for the moment, and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future

generations".

It would take a full-length biography – and one hopes that it would be commissioned by one of the companies he built up, as source of inspiration to the younger generation looking for a role model – to document the many facets of Darbari Seth and his achievements. A brief tribute like this can only provide some glimpses into his personality.

A technocrat's technocrat.

he went far beyond dreams which ordinary mortals dream. He was blessed with one of the rarest traits of leadership – VISION. For instance, in Mithapur he built not only a world-class chemical industry complex but also created



* Shri M. R. Pai was a former Secretary and now Vice-Chairman of the Forum of Free Enterprise, Mumbai and is a public activist.

an industrial township with a community of achievers in a virtual desert. Few people are aware today of the doggedness with which he laboured to convert a desert into a gold mine. For nearly 16 years, Tata Chemicals was in the red, till he made the company into a star performer. His bigger dream of

converting sea water into arable water and transfer the desert into a green paradise could not be realised because of the Licence Permit Quota Raj in which he had to operate.

So meticulous was the economy and efficiency of Mithapur works that at one stage the auditors were

surprised to find an item of miscellaneous income of Rs.70,000. On inquiry, it turned out to be the copper caps of thousands of incandescent lamps in the factory which fused, and were sold as scrap!

The same genius was at work at Tata Tea where he broke new path with his

innovative mind. He made it into a quality tea producer with innovative marketing like small packs for hoteliers and small buyers, bypassing the traditional auction route.

Today there is talk of consumer delight. In a competitive economy it

Memorial at Mithapur- Endowment Lecture at Bangalore Kendra

Smt. Brish Seth inaugurated a memorial in honour of the late Shri Darbari Seth at Mithapur, his Karmabhoomi, on Aug. 21, 2000.

Shri L. M. Singhvi, M.P. and former Indian High Commissioner in the U.K., will be delivering the first 'Shri Darbari Seth Memorial Lecture' at the Bhavan's Bangalore Kendra on Dec 8, 2000 the first death anniversary of Shri Darbari Seth. The Memorial Lecture will be held on the same day every year, thanks to an endowment of one lakh rupees made by the Coorg Foundation, originally set up by Shri Darbari Seth and now headed by Shri R. K. Krishna Kumar

has become an inevitable *mantra*. But even in days of a seller's market, for Darbari Seth's companies, the consumer was a darling. When there was an acute shortage of soda ash, and most of the producers had no scruples in making a quick buck, Seth's Tata Chemicals advertised a firm and fair price, laid down a quota system for regular customers based on a rational pattern, catered to priority sectors like power stations and hospitals, but did not forget the humble washerman, by establishing a quota for him also!

His concern for the people who worked in companies under his leadership was phenomenal. He considered them not as employees, but as partners in progress. Employee welfare measures got his priority attention in all his enterprises. He noted and built up talented people. If Darbari Seth was an ace technocrat, he was equally great in human resources engineering. So great was the loyalty he commanded spontaneously from them that one of his men who was offered a fabulous salary by another company, unhesitatingly declined it. When questioned

why he gave up a dream packet the reply was "I do not work for money. I work for Tatas". He had imbibed from Darbari Seth a strong sense of values and ethics—in the words of Nani Palkhivala, "a self-imposed obedience to the Unenforceable".

Incidentally, when Palkhivala heard the news of Darbari Seth's death, he said: "Both of us were on the same wavelength".

A Karma Yogi, who was never inactive for a moment, Darbari Seth had a sense of childlike curiosity. He would always ask questions and keep on adding to his enormous stock of knowledge of men and matters outside the immediate purview of his work. This thirst for knowledge was coupled with a schoolboyish enthusiasm to undertake new ventures.

In company boards over which he presided, he welcomed discussions. As one outside director noted: "If you presented a viewpoint different from Darbari Seth's he would not resent, but welcome it. He would seek to be enlightened on the rationale of that view, and if convinced Darbari Seth would change his views".

Darling of Investors

He was the darling of investors. While not ignoring financial prudence, he gave the maximum reward to shareholders by way of high dividends and bonus issues. The open offer from Tata Tea Ltd. to shareholders of Consolidated Coffee Ltd. opened a new chapter of transparency in the Indian corporate world. A series of quick decisions – and Darbari Seth had Napoleonic quality of celerity – and deep study had gone into that open offer, which was welcomed by shareholders.

In Coorg, where the Consolidated Coffee Ltd. which became a Tata Tea subsidiary, is located, Darbari Seth saw Nature and a clean environment at their best, and found in the rich culture, traditions and sense of honour of the brave Coorgis, a new world. He set up the Coorg Foundation to develop further its rich culture and also to make it known to the rest of India. He was responsible for setting up a branch of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan in Coorg to further this objective.

While Darbari Seth had all these outstanding qualities, these were all surpassed by his

greatest quality – compassion and consequent passion for community welfare. Considering his firm faith in the Divine, and conviction that he was “an instrument of His Will”, it is not surprising that philanthropic activities were second nature to this great entrepreneur-executive.

On reading an article on computer education for the poor and unemployed, Darbari Seth was greatly moved. His response was typical of the man. He phoned Mr. S. Ramakrishnan, Director General of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, got details, and requested that an appeal for Rs. 1½ crores be sent to a Trust he was associated with before 5 p.m. The cheque was ready the next morning.

Love of “Swadharma”, love of people who worked with him, love of Nature and love of his country coupled with a strong sense of ethical values made Darbari Seth a unique person. He was a 20th century Karmayogi and will be considered as one of the builders of modern India when in the 21st century it becomes a world power based on competence and compassion.

□□□

Krishna and Human Relations - 20

□ HARINDRA DAVE



The Pandava's message was sent with affection — as from a son to his elderly father. This message was not only meant for Dhrutarashtra, but for the whole Kuru clan, and all those present in the hall. Krishna says:

यत्र धर्मो हृद्यमेण सत्यं यत्रानृतेन च ।
हन्त्यते प्रेक्षमाणानां हतास्तत्र सभासदः ॥

(Udyog 93;48)

“Dharma is getting suppressed by Adharma; truth is stifled by falsehood; and the members of this hall are already dead if they do not understand and stop the massacre. People would be destroyed the way river water destroys the trees on its bank. Hence, Dharma lies in handing over the Pandavas their rightful kingdom.”

Krishna knows that Duryodhana was not going to abide by Dharma. Then why does Krishna try so hard to convince Duryodhana to follow the Dharma?

अहं तु तव तेषां च श्रेय इच्छामि भारत ।
धर्माद् अर्थात् सुखात् चैव मा राजन् नीनराः
प्रजाः ॥

(Udyog. 93; 59)

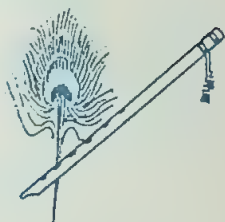
“O Bharat! from within my heart, I wish well for both the parties. And so I advise you not to deprive your people who want to follow Dharma and attain Artha and happiness.

The royal families would either gain or lose in the war but the people on both the sides would definitely be the losers. They will be deprived of three things: (1) Dharma - the strength that holds the society together, (2) Artha - the total meaning of existence and (3) Kama - happiness.

Krishna wishes that the calamity should be avoided. The Pandavas were ready to serve Dhrutarashtra as the elderly relative if the war was prevented and peace prevailed. But if the Kauravas wanted war, the Pandavas would not let

behind.

Hence Krishna tells them :
 "Now you take your decision
 and choose your path."



Krishna has shown two ways
 to tackle the problem : One of
 friendship and the other of
 animosity. Dhrutarashtra is free
 to choose either way, the one
 that 'suit'ed him. Krishna here
 used the word 'suit'
 sarcastically.

Now, who can answer
 Krishna?

All the royal kings gathered
 at the assembly hall, in one way
 or the other, were under an
 obligation to Krishna, having
 sought his favour sometime or
 the other!

And with this reticence, the
 93rd chapter of Udyog Parva
 ends. This chapter is a prelude
 to Gita and so it should be read
 with understanding.

Only Krishna can preach the
 Gita as he wanted to avoid a war,
 at the same time not being afraid
 of the war...

Krishna's mission was
 important, but equally
 important was the discussion on
 peace in the Kuru assembly hall.
 After listening to Krishna's
 powerful speech, no one had the
 courage to come forward and

reply. when all the kings sat
 silently, Parshuram, son of
 Jamadagni, stands up to speak.

Parshuram, Kanva and
 Narada, all the three saints try
 to persuade Duryodhana by
 telling him different stories so
 that he could be convinced to
 shed his ego and accept the hand
 of friendship that Krishna has
 offered on behalf of the
 Pandavas.

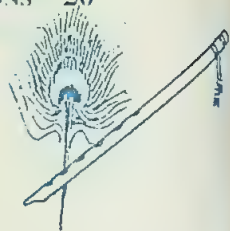
Parshuram tells the story of
 Nara-Narayana.

King Dambodbhava was
 very proud of his strength and
 believed that in the whole world
 there was nobody who could
 match his strength. Two saints,
 Nara and Narayana, were
 meditating on Gandhaman
 mountain, and in an encounter
 with them king Dambodbhava
 gets defeated and his pride
 dissolves.

Parshuram tells Duryodhana
 that Arjuna and Krishna are the
 incarnations of those saints
 Nara and Narayana, and so it is
 neither proper nor right to have
 an encounter with them, as his

defeat would be certain.

Kanva Rshi tells a story of Matalini, who was the charioteer of king Indra. Matali was in search of a good husband for his daughter. His choice falls on Sumukh, grandson of Nagraj Aryak. The father of Sumukh had been killed and eaten up by Garuda, the eagle, who was Nagraj's enemy and Lord Vishnu's vehicle and carrier. The eagle, after killing the Nagraj, had threatened to return the next month to kill the son, Sumukh. So, Matali takes Sumukh to Lord Indra and Lord Indra blesses him with a long life. Garuda (eagle) comes to know about this and is enraged. He tells Indra that he did not know who he was, and how dare he grant a long life to Sumukh, his enemy! Garuda boasts that Lord Vishnu, too, was dependent on him as he carried him everywhere. He had so much strength that Lord Vishnu could be carried on his back and could be supported! Lord Vishnu comes to know about this boast of Garuda and decides to teach him a lesson. So once, Lord Vishnu keeps his hand on Garuda and by its weight he is not able to move, let alone fly! Garuda becomes restless because of the strength of Lord Vishnu's hand. He is about to lose his consciousness, when he



realises his mistake and apologises to Lord Vishnu for his egoistic behaviour. So, the same way, Duryodhana should leave his ego and accept the peace proposal of Krishna.

These stories of Bhagwan Parshuram and Kanva Rshi have no effect on Duryodhan who has not understood the teachings behind these stories. At last, Devarshi Narada stands up.

All these saints try to advise Duryodhana in an indirect way. They have no intention of taking sides and at the same time they do not want to hide the truth. By telling these stories, they want to convey their message and their intention that the fruits of arrogance are not good and that pride should be dissolved and self-respect re-established. All the three of them wish that Duryodhana should abandon his pride and regain his self-respect by accepting the solution Krishna offered.

(To be Contd.)

(Translated from the original Gujarati by Dr. Bharati Haridra Dave)

PRIDE HUMBLLED! – X

Pride of Narada

□ JUSTICE A.S.P. IYER

Narada, the sage bard, used to delight Lord Vishnu in Vaikunta every day with his music. And the Lord used to enjoy it and show his approbation by the usual gestures such as shaking of the head and so on. In course of time Narada got to be cocksure of

his expertness and ability to please the Lord, and a touch of pride and over-confidence began to manifest itself.

Pride is the harbinger of downfall in every region, and in the case of great sages it is unpardonable. The Lord noticed this and wished to teach

Narada a lesson.

One day when Narada was playing his veena before the Lord, he noticed that the Lord was not giving any sign of approbation; on the contrary there were frequent frowns on the Lord's face indicating displeasure. Narada at once

knew that something was wrong, and falling at the Lord's feet, asked to be enlightened as to the cause of the displeasure. The Lord smiled and

said, "If you desire to know what real music is, go to Hanuman who is performing tapas in Kandamadana hill and learn it from him."



Narada set forth to meet Hanuman. On the way when he was passing near a grove he heard the wailings of a number of women and went into the grove to ascertain the cause. He was shocked at what he saw. He saw a group of otherwise beautiful damsels, disfigured in various ways; some with their noses cut, some with other limbs dismembered—a ghastly and pitiable sight. Moved at the heart Narada made enquiries as to the cause of their plight. They said, “We are the *raga devatas*; a rishi named Narada played such bad music today in Vaikunta that we have been reduced to this plight. It is only a really good musician who knows our true forms that can bring us back to our original shapes.” Narada was humbled. He confessed to them who he was. He said that he was going to Hanuman to learn true music and he promised to restore their original forms as an act of expiation for the sin he had in his ignorance and pride committed against the *devatas*.

Narada went to meet Hanuman in his hilly home and explained his mission to him; the latter took the veena from Narada and began to play on it. Narada was simply astonished at the mastery and finish of Hanuman’s music and forgot himself in the enjoyment of that soulful music. After a while Hanuman stopped his playing and put the veena down on the floor. After explaining some subtle points regarding the technique of the art he asked Narada to play on his veena on the lines explained by him. Narada tried to lift his veena from the ground, but it would not move. When Hanuman was playing veena the rocky floor had melted and when he put it down it was on this molten granite. When the rock cooled and solidified the veena had got stuck up in it. Narada did not know what to do. Hanuman thereupon suggested that Narada should try again. Narada tried but in vain. The story goes that Hanuman sang, melted the rock and then took out the veena. Narada was cured of his pride.

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KASHMIR AND ITS FUTURE-3

□ GEN. K.V. KRISHNA RAO PVSM (RETD.)

CHALLENGES BEFORE THE STATE AND CENTRAL GOVERNMENTS

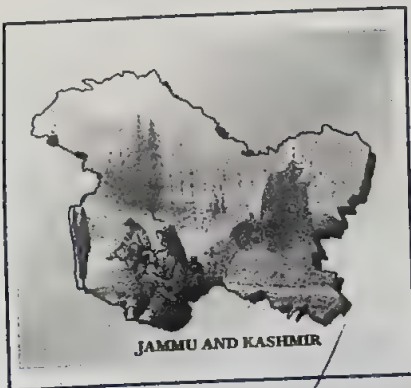
Dr. Farooq was advised that winning of elections was only the first step, and that several challenges confronting the State Government, had to be tackled promptly and efficiently.

The most important of these was to eliminate residual militancy and to ensure that another proxy war cannot be imposed by Pakistan. The State Police had to be rebuilt, to gradually able to take over from the Paramilitary forces and

the Army. A responsive administration had to be provided. Militancy victims had to be rehabilitated. The migrants also had to be brought back and resettled. Reconstruction of damaged schools, dispensaries and bridges etc, had to be carried out. The education system needed overhaul and

fundamentalist education had to be discouraged. Tourism had to be revived and sick industry had to be rehabilitated. Corruption and nepotism had to be eliminated.

Corruption and nepotism had to be dealt with effectively. Democracy had to be extended



down to the grass-roots level. Planning and development had to be revitalized. Effective population control measures had to be enforced. Overall, the expectations of the people were tremendous and the government had to respond positively and without loss of time.

As far as the Centre was concerned, while assistance was required by the State in various fields, certain areas needed particular attention. The State had to be helped by way of adequate forces, to ensure that another proxy war could not be imposed by Pakistan. Secondly, as the State did not have adequate finances for rehabilitation, reconstruction, revival and development, the Centre had to provide reasonable funds. In this connection, the Centre had to ensure that the State administration was thoroughly revamped.

Thirdly, employment had to be found for the large numbers of unemployed youth (over one

lakh) in other parts of the country and in different agencies under the Centre. Of course, the Line of Control and the INTERNATIONAL Border, which are directly under the Centre, had to be kept inviolate. Diplomatic pressure had to be brought on Pakistan to refrain from interference in Jammu and Kashmir. Apart from these, in order to carry the people of the State with the rest of the country, talk of abrogation of Article 370 should be discouraged and great restraint should be exercised in the use of Article 356. Further, the question of autonomy should be resolved.

In this connection, Farooq's recent statement that the State Autonomy Report "is not the Holy Quran where no command could be changed; it is subject to discussion and changes, if necessary" is significant.

POST-DEMOCRACY DEVELOPMENTS

After the restoration of democracy in the State, certain major developments have taken

place. Broadly, these are the Kargil intrusions, the Pakistani coup and the hijacking incident as part of efforts to impose another proxy war.

As far as the Kargil intrusions are concerned, it came to notice in May 1999 that Pakistan had infiltrated across the Line of Control from Zozila to Turtok in snow-clad terrain with some militants, initially estimated at about 200. Subsequently, it was discovered that it was not a mere infiltration, but really an intrusion over a Line of Control of about 150 km of a large force of six battalions or so, that is, about 6000 personnel. They

had come and occupied certain important heights which were generally not held in winter. According to Pakistan, they had planned the operation in October 1998 and occupied the heights by February 1999, although they insist that these were Mujahideen.

However, our Government insisted that the intrusion took place only in May 1999. Whatever it may be, considerable forces had to be inducted into the sector, large-scale attacks supported by even Air Force had to be mounted and the enemy was ultimately cleared, but at considerable cost in terms of casualties to

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our own troops. From the information available so far, it would appear that there was failure of intelligence, inadequate vigilance and perhaps certain amount of complacency after the Lahore Bus Diplomacy. Appropriate lessons should be drawn from this serious lapse by all concerned, and it must be ensured that there is no repetition, as the country cannot afford more such Kargils. In fact, the larger design of Pakistan in the Zozila-Kargil-Turtok Sector, as revealed by the developments, was to isolate Ladakh from the rest of Jammu and Kashmir and to isolate Siachen within Ladakh; and subsequently to wrest them.

Although the Pakistani intrusion was ultimately cleared, they did compel India to commit permanently much larger forces in the area. It must be realised that Pakistan is not going to give up her claim on Kashmir and that she will do everything possible to wrest Kashmir from India.

Military Coup

The other major development that has taken place in Pakistan is the civilian coup and military counter-coup in October 1999. There had been continuous reports of the Ex-Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif destroying the various institutions, in order to gain total personal control over the country. The final bid was to remove the Chief of the Army Staff while he was away in another country (Sri Lanka) and was on his way back by air. However, the Army discovered the mal-intention, staged a counter-coup and the Chief General Pervez Musharraf captured power. The initial reaction in the country was one of acquiescence of the people, as they appeared to have been fed up with Nawaz Sharif's methods.

However, the clamour for return of democracy has started, while the military is trying to consolidate itself. As far as India is concerned,

military rule in Pakistan aggravates our difficulties with that country. It has to be remembered that both the 1965 and 1971 wars were forced upon us when military dictators were at the helm of affairs in Pakistan. However, we must also realise that, irrespective of whether there is democracy or not in Pakistan, the military always had over-riding influence over the government in that country. Our efforts should, therefore, be to talk to them and try to maintain peace, rather than get provoked and fall into the trap of a war, which could be devastating to both sides.

In this connection, it must

be considered only as a deterrent after their first use on Japan in the Second World War, it cannot be guaranteed that in the hands of an irrational power, their use may not be resorted to. Our country should therefore develop a credible nuclear capability and at the same time be prepared in all respects, that is, fight conventional war, or even a nuclear war, if it is thrust upon us.

Proxy War

The third development that has taken place between the two countries has been the continued efforts of Pakistan to impose another Proxy War on INDIA. In this connection the hijacking incident of December

1999, the suicide attacks on Security Forces Camps and the induction of a larger number of foreign militants into

Our efforts should, therefore, be to talk to them and try to maintain peace, rather than get provoked and fall into the trap of a war, which could be devastating to both sides.

Kashmir assume significance. An Indian Airlines aircraft coming from Kathmandu to New Delhi on December 24, 1999, was hijacked and landed in Amritsar for a short while before ultimately proceeding to Kandahar in Afghanistan. There was an opportunity to effectively deal with the hijackers in Amritsar on December 24, 1999, but this was frittered away. Subsequently, after protracted negotiations, top hard core militants were taken by the Foreign Minister of India to Kandahar and exchanged for the passengers. There has been considerable criticism of the deal, as the Government has been saying that they will not buckle down. Earlier on, in December 1990, when some hard core militants were released to secure the return of the then Home Minister's daughter it was found that militancy in Kashmir received a tremendous boost. The fear this time was that a similar thing would happen in Kashmir, and

it appears to be coming true. This was not the first hijacking incident, and by now the government should be competent enough to deal with such incidents in good time. Allowing militants to get away with such successes, will naturally have an adverse impact on the morale of the Security Forces who make tremendous sacrifices to first capture the hard core militants, as also on the morale of the population at large.

THE FUTURE

As for the future of the Kashmir problem, the international nuances as they affect Kashmir need to be understood. The Taliban was created by Pakistan with American help, to drive the Russians out of Afghanistan. Further, Pakistan has always tried for obtain strategic depth against India. She has acquired this by having a friendly government in Afghanistan and by making it depend on Pakistan for various necessities, including arms

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support. However, because of Osama bin Laden's activities, she has a long history of close relations with Pakistan for various reasons, and may not like to ditch Pakistan, for fear of its going into fundamentalist hands. At the same time, the USA wishes to improve its relations with India; and it is in India's interest to do likewise, to serve its own vital interests. Therefore, while Pakistan feels that bilateral talks would not yield the desired results in her favour, and endeavours to involve third-party mediation (mainly the USA) for resolution of Kashmir, India should adhere to her stand of strictly

abiding by the Simla Agreement and avoiding any third-party interference. It must also be remembered that a Parliament Resolution exists for the retrieval of Pakistan Occupied Kashmir. Overall therefore, it would be in India's interests to confine action against proxy war to Indian limits, and at the same time demonstrate its peaceful intentions by persisting with bilateral talks.

Within the State of Jammu and Kashmir itself, no effort should be spared to ensure that the security situation is kept well under control at all times, and that a competent, clean and

responsive government is provided to the people. The militancy victims need to be rehabilitated, the damaged assets must be

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reconstructed, sick industries, tourism etc. need to be revived and efforts must be made to restore full normalcy. The Centre must ensure that whatever help is required by the state, is made available to it, and at the same time, the State Government is made accountable. Constant monitoring of the situation and timely action are vital, to ensure that the situation never gets out of hand again.

As I mentioned in the beginning, Kashmir is an intricate problem with international ramifications. It will continue to pose the major threats to the integrity of India in the foreseeable future; and needs handling with finesse. We need not get unduly excited

by the Pakistani machinations. Instead, any contingency that arises should be foreseen and anticipated to the extent possible, effective plans prepared and tackled with coolness and efficiency. It is the results on the ground that impress both the people of Kashmir as well as the International Community, and not any amount of rhetoric. The vital need to keep the people of the State with the country, requires little stress. This is only possible when the people are convinced that their lives, identity and future are safe in Indian hands. Finally, the vital need for constant vigilance and preparedness cannot be over-emphasised.

(Concluded)

BHAKTA MIRA

DR. BANKEY BEHARI

Born in A.D. 1547 in far-off Marwar, in the village Kurkhi, this princess of Chitor, forsaking the pomp and glory of the palaces started IN THE QUEST OF THE FLUTE-PLAYER barefooted, to tread the path that led to the Abode of Eternal Bliss. In the forehead of the little child shone the signs of future greatness as she rose up startled by the sound of the marriage procession that passed below the palace of her father, Rao Ratan Singh, and, peeping through the barred windows of the balcony and seeing the child-bridegroom dressed artistically, this baby of

five cried out, "Mother, where is my bride-groom?" The mother smiled at the innocence of the child. She seemed to have read in her broad forehead the future greatness of her simple babe and replied (pointing to the little lovely idol of Lord Krishna that stood in the temple and was so much loved by the child), "Giridhara Gopala is thy bridegroom." Since then Gopala became a subject of special fascination to her. All her discourses were about this beautiful image. All

her time was spent in bathing and dressing it. She worshipped it. She slept with it on a deer-skin. She danced



about it. She sang to it lovely songs. Its joys were her joys, and, when a slight ray of gloom was witnessed by her on its bright forehead, that would make her weep for hours, till she again saw a clear smile on the face that would captivate her heart. To everybody it became known that this mad girl seemed to read the expression of this idol, and to hold conversation with the seemingly mute Krishna.

Thus passed some years in patiently wooing her Beloved. From her childhood, therefore, she could know of no other love but that for her dear Krishna. This could not be tolerated by the conservative, custom-ridden family, which like others would permit no such display of fancy and would scoff at those paroxysms of Devotion, and sneer at the flow of tears. In their eyes these visionary dreams had no place in the practical life of the household. They mocked at it, as they saw things from a different angle. They soon thought of a way to take the maniac out of her

madness for the Lord and relieve her of the divine intoxication. Therefore messengers were despatched and great pains taken to find out a husband suitable for the princess. The fateful day arrived when her daily worship was disturbed by the music of the drum, by feastings, feedings and a variety of ceremonies; for, this was the bridal procession that had arrived at Ratan Singh's palace. Mira was married to the heir of the mighty State of Chitor—the eyenore of all Rajput eyes and a terror to the conquering Moghuls.

The husband was the valiant Bhojraj, the eldest son of Rana Sanga, whose name is writ large for all time to come in the annals of Rajasthan as the solitary figure that would own allegiance to nobody, but would rather experience all the hardships of life and would walk bare-footed on the burning sands of Rajputana, with his hungry-princes at his side and the midday sun overhead, and would patiently watch even the last particle of loaf, prepared

from the bark of a tree, being snatched away from the hands of the famished children. But she would not budge an inch from the traditions of the Rajputs, who could never recognize Muslim suzerainty. It is these people that bore the banner of Rajput chivalry. It was this blood that ran in the veins of the family into which Mira Bai was married. The son, Bhojraj, the husband of this little saint, had inherited all the martial qualities of his ancestors. Any general would be proud of the physical appearance he bore, the valiant qualities he possessed. The blood of these Rajputs has been the pride of India, but martial qualities have no place in the sphere of love, where humility is the ideal, and the lowly alone can attain to the highest pedestal. Vanity has no place there and pride is an outcast. How could this marriage then prove to be a happy one?

But blessed is Mira who left no stone unturned to please her husband and see that his mandates were obeyed. She

tried to give him no occasion for offence. She stood out a sublime figure of a devoted wife, an ideal that could be the boast of any Hindu lady. But in her love for Lord Krishna she could accept no compromise. To her that was supreme over all duties spiritual, moral or temporal. There she stood adamant in her virgin glory, guarding her rights with meticulous care. Beyond what was necessary she recognized no vagaries in life. After finishing her household work, she would go to her temple where sat the joy of her heart the little image of Lord Krishna and start in the company of one or two devotees the nightlong ecstatic dances before her Lord and sing songs to Him. In her ecstatic moments, witnessing this exuberance of the heart and complete effacement of the self, the Lord would Himself appear. The little lovely Idol that sat mute would get up, clasp His devotee to the bosom, play the melodious tunes on the flute to her, and hold long discourses.

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This was Mira's joy. This was Mira's life. Mira was born for it. This was what Mira could not give up.

This frantic display of self-surrender and utter recklessness of form and formalities greatly irritated the mother-in-law and other ladies of her husband's family. The mother-in-law, after giving her the usual lectures on the code of married life, and telling her that the discharge of domestic duties alone could lead to domestic happiness as conceived by the worldly-minded, told the innocent bride to bow to the family idol of Durga, the image of Gauri, the goddess of *Shakti*. But the young consort was too imbued with love for her dear Krishna to think of any other love. With tears in her eyes, in abject humility she fell at the feet of the lady and through sobs broke out: "Mother, this head has already been dedicated to the lotus-feet of Sri Giridhara Gopala. Forgive, mother, it can bow before no other god or goddess now. Mother, do not

press me any more. Your threats and coaxings leave me unmoved." The mother found the daughter-in-law adamant in her resolve. Though in her heart of hearts she blessed the girl for her pious determination and fearless love for the Lord, yet, to keep up appearances and follow the trodden track of social rules, she admonished the bride. This had no salutary effect on Mira. Then came the turn of Uda, the sister of Bhojraj, to come and plead with her sister-in-law to give up her obstinacy and yield. *Yield*—this is a horrible term to the devotees of the Lord.

The strong reply that the little Mira gave to her sister-in-law's scurrilous and offensive remarks soon aroused the wrath of Uda. She and her companions started a regular conspiracy against her to take her to task for her obstinacy and began to defame her. They went to Bhojraj and told him that his wife held discourses with her paramours at dead of night in the temple. That they had themselves

witnessed this tete-a-tete going on every night. That the Prince could convince himself by watching it for himself. That it was a matter for shame for the family and brought a great slur upon the fair name of Chitor that the wife of the heir-apparent should carry on such liaisons. The anger of the Prince knew no bounds, blood rushed to his cheeks, and with a sword in his hand, he hurried into the apartments of his newly wedded wife to kill her and stop all these scandals. Mira fortunately was not in the room. The Prince was rushing like a maniac when some kinder soul came and pacified him, told him not to lose himself so soon, but first satisfy himself of the truth of it, lest he may have cause to repent later on. He accepted the advice. He abandoned the idea for the time being and anxiously waited for the fateful hour of the night when he was to be called in to witness the love-scene.

At dead of night the girls came to call the Prince, and provoked him by saying,

"Shame on the family whose ladies carry on such love intrigues. Go now and satisfy yourself of the daily nocturnal movements of your wife who pretends to be a great lover of the Lord and who, in spite of the repeated requests of mother, would not bow to the goddess *Shakti*". The Prince rushed to the temple unable to control his passion any longer and there he found Mira fully absorbed in making her confessions of love to her Divine Beloved and making complete surrender. Before Mira could finish her sentences he broke open the door and rushed towards her: but he was completely stunned when he saw no one else but Mira seated in an ecstatic mood, completely unperturbed by the entrance of the intruder and absorbed in conversing with the little Idol that stood before her. But the eyes of the Prince could not discern the Lord behind the mask that He wore, screened as they were by the evil of *Maya*. He saw nothing else but the Idol. He caught hold of Mira

and asked her with whom she was conversing. Mira, strong in the strength of her Beloved, smiled, looked up to him and said "See for yourself". He cried, "Show me thy lover. I am athirst for his blood." Pointing to the little image in the front, she said, "There He sits: shatter Him to pieces, if you can; there is the Eternal One who has always been stealing the butter of the Gopis in Vraja, sometimes stealing their clothes as they went down to bathe. But more than all He has stolen my heart and gives it not back. But I do not complain of it, for, therein lies my solace. See how He smiles at His mischief! No, He again assumes that old grim face. Beloved! Smile once more as You smiled of yore! Ah no, He feels I have given myself up to the Prince. No dear, no, wait. Oh wait. Why are you parting so early? Pray, wait. W_a_i_t. W_a_i_t. W_a_i_t." And Mira fainted away. This was a queer experience for the Prince, who hurried away. The other girls who had followed him stood

aghast, and began to see things in a different light altogether. It was an unusual experience to them. Uda ran to kiss her sister-in-law_the fainted Mira; but she was deterred from within; for, it was she who was partly responsible for the accusations against this goddess of piety in human form. The girls could not read the mind of the Prince as he left the place.

Henceforward the Prince felt that his wife had gone mad, and so he did not for some time trouble himself with the affair. But the world saw this through the eyes of scandal, and rumour went round that Mira had started mixing freely with the Sadhus, and various were the motives assigned to the act by Dame Rumour. But Mira was careless of these ignoble talks that were the topics of the day; unaffected, she would go on signing her old song:--
*"Now none else but Him can I claim as my own.
 I forsook my father and my mother and all those that were dear to me.*

*In the company of the Sadhus I
sacrificed my world and my
modesty.*

*I rushed to meet a Saint when
one appeared, and wept when
the wordly crossed my path.*

*With tears I nourished the
everlasting creeper of love.*

*In my search I met the
deliverers—*

The Saint and the Holy Name.

*Thenceforward the Name
within and the Saint overhead
have lighted my path.*

*To the Lord, the servant Mira
has consigned herself.*

*What cares she for the rumours
that be current all round!"*

(For original Hindi text of
this song).

She continued to mix freely
with the Sadhus. The Prince,
seeing her resolve as
adamantine as ever, gave up his
militant attitude, and got a
temple especially constructed
for her to carry on her
devotional practices.

Akbar In Disguise

The news of the devotion
of Mira for Krishna spread far
and wide, so much so that the
Emperor Akbar and his chief

musician Tansen were seized
with the desire of seeing the
wife of the heir-apparent of
Mewar, whose songs, it was
rumoured, were so full of
genuine devotion for the Lord
the He Himself appeared. They
strongly yearned to hear the
songs sung by Mira herself. But,
fearing their lives were not
secure in case they went in
state, they disguised
themselves as mendicants, and
started incognito for Chitor.
After a long journey, at last,
they came to the temple of
Mira, where her Idol sat mute
and glorious, and bowed before
the seat where Mira sat in
devotion before her Lord. The
new arrivals were transfixed at
seeing the delicate, innocent
and smiling face of the child of
God, which seemed to
welcome the new entrants and
to shower her blessings upon
them. Akbar would have rushed
to prostrate himself at the feet
of the devotee and disclosed his
disguise; but he was kept back
by Tansen, who told him it
would mean death to them if
strict secrecy was not

maintained about their identity. The Emperor then sat silent. As the devotees sat round Mira, she started singing her songs, When the moment arrived, she jumped up and started her ecstatic dances. The scene was so much enlivened that for the time being everyone forgot himself and saw divine shafts of light shooting forth from the Idol and encircling Mira in a halo. Fragrance spread throughout. Some lost their consciousness, seeing Mira at the height of her emotions fall flat on the ground, absorbed in divine consciousness.

When Mira recovered and wanted to go away after the day's prayers were over, Akbar rose from his seat and, with folded hands, approached Mira and entreated her to accept a little present of a necklace. Mira refused, saying that a servant of the Lord needs nothing and asks from nobody except the Lord Himself. But the Emperor humbly insisted, saying that it was an offering made at the lotus feet of Lord Krishna, whose image stood

before him, and that she should not refuse it. The name of Krishna this was the strongest and the weakest point in Mira made her thoughtful. When the thing came in the name of the Lord, she could say nothing but accept it. The necklace therefore lay at the feet of the Idol. The Emperor, however, left the place with a heavy heart, steeped in reverence and love for the Lord. It was a great experience for the Emperor, and such occurrences were responsible for the tolerant nature and liberal views of the great Moghul.

He was a great success in uniting the various factions; but, whatever the theologians may say, he failed in the domain of religion and spirituality. The reason is clear. He sought to reap by the sickle of knowledge the fruits of Devotion and wanted to experience with his intellect the divine thrills which are the very life of a lover of God. No such experiences and interpretations could lighted his path. He remained the Emperor

no doubt, of the green fertile fields of India, that yielded fodder to the animals and nurtured the drosser element in man, the body. He could not reign over the human heart; for, its king sits on a subtler seat and obtains that position as the result of a different kind of training, which is the outcome of years of penance,—not the penance of body but that of desires. When humility becomes enthroned in the heart then alone the goal is reached.

When the news spread that the strangers of yesterday were the Emperor Akbar and his musician Tansen, and that the Emperor touched the feet of the blessed Mira, Prince Bhojraj could not restrain himself any longer. Burning with anger, the words shot forth from his mouth like fire: "Could a Muslim dare approach a Rajput lady, even to make an offering and leave the soil of Rajputana safe? Fie on Rajputs, who heard the news and did not take revenge!" The Rana could not thenceforth tolerate her living in a separate

temple. He was determined to remove her from the world. He therefore went to Mira and severely reprimanded her for having permitted a Muslim to enter the temple. "Drown thyself in some river", he exclaimed, "and henceforth never show thy face to the world. Thou hast brought the greatest blot on the fair name of Rajputana by allowing a Moghul to touch thy feet. Thou canst not deny the truth of it; for lo! There is the proof of it—the necklace".

Sufficient for the day was the tragedy thereof. The mischief was done. Rajasthan was to lose her glory for ever. The only divine being in it started on her pilgrimage of Love to the distant regions where diviner elements reigned, and for which holy mission the Creator had sent her a messenger. With the mandate of her Lord she started like a pilgrim bound on the errand of Love, which needed the sacrifice of her life.

□□□

वेदोऽखिलो धर्ममूलम् । वेदो नित्यमधीयताम् । वेदाः वयं वः श्रणं प्रपन्नाः । वेदा ये नः परं धनम् ।



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Vedas & Shastras Education (Siksha) / Rakshana Endowment :	12,000/= P.A. (per Student)	Rs. 1lakh

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Donate liberally for noble and sacred Vedic cause.

Some Ideas of the 20th Century – 10

□ V.S.R.K.

The Chaos Theory

It is claimed that the Chaos Theory represents the third revolution in the twentieth century science after Einstein's *Relativity* and Max Planck's *Quantum Mechanics*. It relates to the unpredictable behaviour of certain 'systems of nature'. For a scientist, a system is an organised body of material or immaterial things. Classical science concerned itself with the discovery of laws that governed the natural systems and the study of their inter-relationships. Isaac Newton's (1642-1727) gravitational theory led to a mechanical conception of the universe governed by discoverable laws of nature. But Edward Lorenz of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, only a little

more than two decades ago, found an 'orderly disorder' in the weather patterns he studied on the computer and declared: "The average person, seeing that we can predict tides pretty well a few months ahead would say, 'why can't we do the same thing with the atmosphere, it's just a different fluid system, the laws are about as complicated'. I realized that any physical system that behaved non-periodically would be unpredictable". Much of the jibe against the weatherman is largely due to the unpredictability of a system that behaves non-periodically. It is said that predictions about the weather beyond six or seven days are 'worthless'.

Scientists use a picturesque phrase to describe

this 'unpredictable' behaviour – *Butterfly Effect*. A small change in the initial conditions of any system can cause unpredictable consequences. To put this differently, because of the 'sensitive dependence upon initial conditions', a slight disturbance in one of many fluctuating conditions in weather can produce huge variations in time. "A butterfly stirring the air to-day in Peking can transform storm systems next month in New York". An ideal illustration could be the initial knock at the billiards ball. An error in the initial shot causes a slight change in the path of the ball but with subsequent collisions the ball veers farther and farther from the intended path. But for friction which slows down its pace, the long-term movement is quite unpredictable. Says James Gleick, the author of 'Chaos' (Viking Penguin, 1987); "It would be like giving an extra shuffle to an already well-shuffled pack of cards.

You know it will change your luck; but you don't know whether for better or worse".

Medicine is another field to which the Chaos theory applies. 'Chaos Predicting the Unpredictable' is the title of an article by F. R. Firth in the British Medical Journal, 1991 (quoted by Prof. B. M. Hegde). According to him, the human body, which is driven continuously by energy derived from food and oxygen has to be non-linear and chaotic. From this point of view, normal health and disease are not just opposites. "A physiological system has a certain amount of innate variability and with loss of this variability a transition to a less complicated, more ordered state, signals disease and impaired system". (R. Poole – 'Is it healthy to be chaotic?' Science – 1989.)

Stephen Hawking, the wonder man of Cambridge, points out that the universe is drawing inexorably toward greater and greater disorder.

Entropy (a parameter representing the state of disorder of a system at the atomic, ionic or molecular level), he says, increases in any closed system not in equilibrium; equilibrium being a state of affairs that has an inherent tendency to change while circumstances remain the same. Apart from meteorology and medicine, economics and ecology are the systems found to be subject to 'Chaos'.

The Chaos Theory has opened up a wide field for research. Modern physics, as Bertrand Russell has said, tells us 'much less about the physical world than we thought it did'.

Along with the Chaos Theory, scientists talk of fractals (self-similar shapes) and self-organisation. There are very interesting aspects of science

indicating evolving complexity in natural systems. (See Dr. Arvind Kumar's 'Chaos, Fractals and Self-organisation', National Book Trust, India-1996).

White Dwarfs and Black Holes

Stars fascinate not only children but men of all ages. They twinkle from afar, like a diamond in the sky. But we continue to wonder 'what you are, up above the world so high'. The number of stars that one can see from our planet, the earth, is around 3000. But then there are 200 billion billion stars. Are they just tiny bright things? Most stars started shining 10 billion years ago. They are spread evenly throughout the universe. The sun, a medium-sized star, is the nearest star to the earth and that means 150 million kilometres away. The stars are of



Dr. S. Chandrasekhar

various sizes – Supergiants, giants and medium-sized (like the Sun) and small. The neutron stars are the smallest, with as much mass as the sun. They have a diameter of 20 kilometers as against the Sun's with a dia of 1.4 million km – 109 times the diameter of the earth. Groups of stars form galaxies and the sun is one of the stars of the galaxy called the Milky Way.

Indian studies of the stars go back to antiquity and astronomy is one of the sciences in which it may well claim to be the pioneer, bound as it was to astrology, one of the six 'Vedangas', and looked upon as the 'eyes of the Vedas'. In the line of Aryabhata (5th century A.D.) and Bhaskaracharya (11th century A.D.) came one of the great astro-physicists of the 20th century - Subramanian Chandrasekhar (Oct 10, 1910 – Aug 21, 1995). Dr. Chandrasekhar has several books to his credit, the most 'seminal' of which is 'The

Mathematical Theory of Black Holes' (1983).

Dr. Chandrasekhar is associated with the controversy over white dwarfs and the theory of black holes. Classical science held that stars collapsed when the hydrogen fuel in them got exhausted and became planet-sized, dense balls called 'white dwarfs' due to the force of their own gravity. Dr. Chandrasekhar challenged this theory and mathematically established that *only stars with a mass less than 1.44 times the solar mass could survive as white dwarfs. This limit – 1.44 times less than the solar mass – is called 'Chandrasekhar Limit'*. This finding, presented by Dr. Chandrasekhar at 25, met with hostility from scientists led by Sir Arthur Eddington, and it took about 50 years for him to win recognition. The Nobel Prize citation in 1983 mentioned white dwarfs as 'possibly the best known achievement' of Dr. Chandrasekhar. Similarly, he theoretically proved that a

neutron star would continue to collapse indefinitely until a stage was reached when its surface gravitation became so intense that it would become invisible because no light could escape from it. (Stars emit light because of nuclear fusion of hydrogen atoms resulting in helium and energy. The energy escapes in the form of light). The exhaustion of the hydrogen fuel takes place after millions of years through various stages, beginning from gaseous nebulae. The main gases that interact to cause tremendous heat and pressure are hydrogen and helium, carbon and oxygen. Finally, with the cessation of nuclear reaction, a star becomes a 'white dwarf' or a smaller star. "The oxygen in the air, the iron in your blood, and the calcium in your bones were all formed in the interiors of stars that exploded long before the solar system was formed." (World Encyclopaedia) Dr. Chandrasekhar's discovery has a great bearing on research into

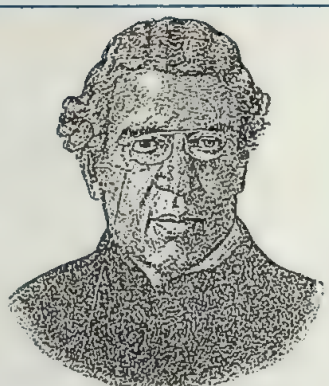
A space. Significantly, on July 23, 1999, NASA, commemorating the 30th year of man's first landing on the moon, sent up a satellite observatory to orbit the earth and called it 'Chandra'. It was done in honour of Dr. Chandrasekhar who spent a lifetime in the study of the mysterious universe of stars.

Plant Life

Do plants respond to external stimuli? Do they feel pain? Do they feel relieved when the cause of pain is removed? It was an Indian scientist who replied in the affirmative to these questions and demonstrated his propositions with simple equipment. He once declared: "I am attempting to carry out the traditions of my country which, so far back as 25 centuries ago, welcomed scholars from different parts of the world within the precincts of the ancient seats of learning at Nalanda and Taxila". Dr. Jagdish Chandra Bose (1858-1937), through his

demonstrations, established the Indian Vedantic conception of the unity of creation.

Dr. Bose, who aspired to become an administrator, turned a scientist and joined the Presidency College, Calcutta, as Professor of



Dr. Shri J. C. Bose

The roots are not the sole media for procuring food for the plants.

Plants have nerves and they, too, feel the pain when hurt. (With the help of an instrument devised by himself, Bose

Physics. He expanded his area of interests to include plant physiology. At the Zoological Society of Paris, in 1900, he presented his famous paper 'On the Similarity of Effect of Electric Stimulus on Inorganic and Living Substances'. His propositions developed during 1907 – 1933 were:

Plants, like human beings, possess the power of response.

A plant sways abnormally like a drunkard if treated with an alcoholic substance and becomes normal when the cause is removed.

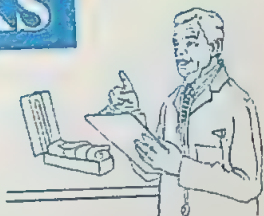
showed both pain and relief felt by plants). The feelings are transmitted through glands in the branches and the stalks of the leaves and the fruits.

Plant cells expand and contract like the heart in men and animals.

At a time when increasing number of people are concerned over 'Greenhouse Effect' and Ecological Imbalances, it is good to remember Dr. Bose's findings if only to awaken in ourselves the instinct of sympathy with God's creation.

□□□

DOCTOR SPEAKS IS ACADEMIC MEDICINE FOR SALE?



□ PROF. B.M. HEGDE
MD, FRCP(LOND.).FRCP(EDINB.),
FRCP(GLASG.),FRCP(DUBLIN), FACC

Hold on! Before you want to hang me for writing this article, please note that the heading is borrowed from an editorial in the *New England Journal of Medicine*. (2000; 342: 1516-1518) My lamentations about medicine having gone to the market place, riding piggyback on technology, making it almost impossible to believe any of the short case-control studies published even in the "respectable" journals for years, had only fallen on deaf ears. I have become a laughing stock in the higher echelons of the Indian medical academia! I am told that a group of cardiologists in Bombay, when asked to assess me for the Fellowship of the Academy

of Medical Sciences recently, opined that "he is only a quack and has no idea what cardiology is all about!" I did not become the Fellow—rightly so.

I was so happy that at least some of the "great" people could assess me correctly! Now comes the time bomb from America. I am sure our holy cows would now wake up from their sedative induced slumber. They would want things to come from America for them to believe anything in any field. Our Western slavish mentality knows no bounds. We could realize that Amartya Sen is a gem (Bharata Ratna) only after the Nobel committee identified him! He has been advocating his "poverty economics" for

years without getting any recognition from us in the past.

"The ties between clinical research and industry include not only grant support, but also a host of other financial arrangements. Researchers serve as consultants to companies whose products they are studying, join the advisory boards, and the speakers' bureaus, enter into patent and royalty arrangements, agree to be listed authors of articles ghost-written by interested companies, promote drugs and devices at company sponsored symposia, and allow themselves to be plied with expensive gifts and trips to luxurious settings. Many also have equity interest in companies. Academic medical institutions are themselves growing increasingly beholden to industry. Harvard used to be an exception; but they are also softening their stand." Wrote Marcia Angell. (NEJM 2000; 342:1517)

I could quote some of my bitter experiences, that I had shared with readers from time

to time, here to complete the picture. Time was when a symposium on treatment of high blood pressure was held in a five-star hotel in Goa. I was pitted to speak against a star speaker from America. This gentleman is a regular company "employee", having a very high academic status in addition. The drug in question was a receptor blocker of a particular new variety. While the American went on to describe the drug as the panacea for all hypertensives and should be the first drug of choice, I had to, per force, take the opposite stand as I was convinced that this drug was not the drug of first choice. This great master ridiculed me and the audience, of course, was with him. In March 2000 while I was on a lecture tour of some Universities in the US, early morning wake-up alarm in my hotel room was blaring out the news item that *this very drug*, in the first ever human study, had caused many more heart failures, while it is touted as the drug to prevent heart failure. The study has since been

stopped and the newscaster was asking nearly a million Americans who are already on the drug to contact their doctors to get the drug changed immediately. I tried in vain to contact the "great" man but to no avail. This happens again and again.

No one has so far described science in a way that satisfies everyone. "Science, for example, cannot give absolute proofs of the laws of nature because, although we can test an idea repeatedly, we can never be sure that an exception does not exist," says Michael Cross in the *New Scientist* 2000 February 19th. Every time something goes wrong and is detected, anyone could take refuge under this clause. ***This statement of Cross should not be misread to say that science is not good.*** It only goes to emphasize the fact that scientific methods are but one of the many ways to human wisdom..

Let us examine why there is such a large nexus between the academia and the for-profit industry. For one thing even

hospitals have come under the latter umbrella! It is argued that ties between industry and academia are necessary for "technology-transfer", a word invented after 1980s, when the American Government passed the *Bayh-Dole Act*. Academic institutions supported by Federal grants could patent and license new products discovered by their faculty in return for royalties. This law is cited when large-scale tie-ups go on between these two institutions. It is needless to say that we follow that rule blindly in our country. The second reason given is that academic Institutions needed the money very badly. ***These are the main reasons why we are where we are today.*** The business goals of the companies influence the mission of the research institutions and also influence their final results.

One of the reasons why the cost of modern medical treatment, both physical and surgical, has skyrocketed is because the expenses incurred by the industry for its sponsored trips of the medical scientists,

meals in top of the range hotels, gifts, honorariums, conference and symposia expenses, consulting fees, and research grants eventually are paid by the consumer! There is no free lunch in this world. Companies try and catch doctors very young when they are still house officers. Rothman records in a report (*NEJM* 2000; 342:1284) that the companies' gifts are intended to buy the goodwill of young physicians with long prescribing lives ahead of them. Similar is the situation in many areas where the industry uses the talent of the academia for their research. Ultimately it is a Faustian bargain.

In fact, there are a few "researchers" who would not have seen a single patient all their lives, but profess to the world about the drug treatment of major illnesses. The companies mainly target those diseases that are likely to be lifelong business for them like diabetes, high blood pressure, coronary artery disease etc. There are many guidelines all over the world for the treatment of these diseases. If one takes

care to carefully scrutinize them, one quickly realizes how fallacious they are. To give an example of hypertension, there are six guidelines in all: we in India are trying to have our own guidelines, in addition. If all of them are computed together they cover just about 39% of the patients. For the rest there are no guidelines. A young but enthusiastic doctor gets frustrated looking at these. If any of the guidelines are not convenient to the drug companies the companies get their "great brains" to refute them and have new guidelines. This happened with the American National Guidelines for high blood pressure management some time ago. (JNC V).

One could take any area for scrutiny. Anti-cholesterol drugs, anti-arrhythmic drugs, heart failure drugs, anti-hypertensive drugs, anti-diabetic drugs, pain killers, anti-cancer drugs or, for that matter, many of the procedures for surgical corrections and even some of the untested technologies like coronary care

units, terminal care units, flow catheters and many other areas have their load of skeletons in their cupboards. An unbiased audit would get these skeletons out of the cupboards.

When the gulf between the industry and the academia narrows, as has happened now, medical students and house officers, under the constant tutelage of industry representatives, learn to rely very much on drugs and devices more often than they should do. Young doctors learn that there is a pill for every ill and a surgical correction for every anatomic deviation from the normal. Faculty members could get distracted from their teaching commitments. Doctors get used to these company courtesies of receiving gifts and favours to further their continuing medical education. In this generation there is always an overemphasis on drugs and devices that could ultimately work against patient interests. The Hippocratic oath really becomes hypocritical oath.

It is time to do a bit of introspection before it is too late in the day for us to do even that. We should see that we are not open to the charge that we are for sale. Academic medical schools should educate their students on the ills of the prevailing scenario and have to inculcate in their students the love for ethics and give them a good idea of pharmacoeconomics and the ways of the business world that may be alien to them at that stage in life.

Let us not forget that 80% of the world population even today does not have any touch with modern medicine; 62% of upper middle class Americans cannot afford health insurance as the premia are sky high for them; 57% of Britons do wish to have alternative systems of medicine when they are ill, despite the fact that they have the free National Health Service. *Let us also remember that patients could very well live without doctors, but doctors could never survive without patients!*

[Sponsored by Janata Janardhan Arogya Pratishtan, founded by Shri Durga Prasad Mandelia]

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Our Bombay Contact Person

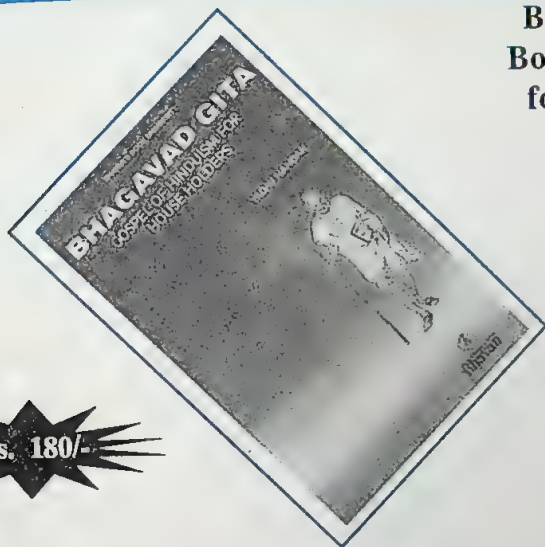
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BHAGAVAD GITA

Gospel of Hinduism for House Holders

□ YADAV NANDAN

India's most valued and venerated gift to the world is *Bhagavad Gita*, the *Gospel of Hinduism*, the only philosophical poem of profound insights, and sublime precepts, valid for all raves, climes, times.

Although *Gita* is a book in *Mahabharata* epic, it does not



speak of war. It strongly advocates peace and harmony, morality and ethical ways. Lord Krishna enjoins in Gita that every human has to fight his own *Mahabharata*, or conflicts and tangles in his life. He should pursue knowledge and practice all austere disciplines to become a Yogi, perfect person. *Gita* had achieved unique distinction after its composition some 2300 years back. From that early time, it is accepted as the super scripture of Hindus till now. It is universally venerated as a book of life, a book of daily guidance. More than that, its iconoclastic thoughts and preachings had swept away in one onslaught, *Yagyas* and idolatry, many inequalities, and laid strong stress on pursuit of knowledge, action without reward, sacrifice, and sharing.

In this issue, we reproduce a portion "Avatar".

One of the most lustrous contributions in Bhagavad Gita, is the episode of Avatars. In chapter IV Lord Krishna pointedly remarks that whenever

adharma (impiety) becomes ascendant and weakens virtuous living, I descend to earth for protection of the good and the pious, and re-establish moral values.

Incarnation or Avatar is the principle, by which an evolved personality invested with more or less divine powers, undertakes to descend in flesh to the earth, and encourage and inspire the devotees to continue to live principled life; and forcefully reject evil ways.

There is no reference or familiarity with incarnations or Avatars in the Vedic writings or Buddhist literature.

It is plausible that the Vedic scholars must have felt shaken by the formidable descent and presence of Gautam Buddha and his large and enticing popularity amongst the people. To meet the challenge they must have felt the compulsion to induct equally towering lustrous man-god. They then are known to have first posed the shimmering personality of Shiva. Thereafter Lord Krishna had made the entry, and we find

first lavish reference and picturisation of Krishna in Mahabharata, first as charioteer, then as a powerful leader and guide, and last as God, Brahma.

The doctrine of Avatars or incarnations was already in practice with the Jains, with lustrous cluster of Tirthankars, the last being Mahavira. Buddhism after Buddha, must have been attracted to the tradition of incarnation, as of immense utility for keeping the followers together, and brought in Bodhisatvas.

In course of time Krishna emerged as a parallel personality of equal or greater charisma and knowledgeability. He was also available to the millions of followers to worship, and pray to, and confide their problems. In various roles that Krishna's illustrious career touched, Krishna became the central pivot of Indian life. However there is no introduction to Krishna in the historical writing of the times. A disciple of Rsi Ghor Angira was also known as Krishna. A Krishna was also demi-god of the Yadav

tribe. Another Krishna, son of cattle herd Nanda belonged to strongly entrenched Ahir community.

In the Hindu fold, in proper classification, there are ten incarnations. Amongst the ten, eight are mythological puranic entities to explain the evolution of the world. Rama and Krishna however remain as two true Avatars which continue to rule over the hearts and minds of millions of Hindu devotees, as living examples of their moral precepts and ennobling ideals.

While Rama remains a revered divinity, ideal of virtuousness, and path-finder of Hindu moral principles, the massive Mahabharata epic is interpreted as a distinguished narration about the limitless attributes of Krishna as a lover, unique statesman, and as a divine being. Bhagavad Gita which forms part of Mahabharata is a marvel of guiding principles to help man in all settings to build himself up as a Yogi, who had mastered all disciplines and skills.

□□□

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World of Books

“When Smoke Gets in Your Eyes”: By Santanu Ray, Writers Workshop, 162/92 Lake Gardens, Calcutta – 700 045, pp 141. Price Rs.150/-.

This is the autobiography of an executive of the Imperial Tobacco Company, who rose to become its Vice-Chairman. After retirement, he had been associated with a number of public sector undertakings and founded the advertising agency, React.

“Montu” Ray is a grandson of Deshabandhu Chittaranjan Das and was married to the late Kobita Sarkar (alias Rita Ray, eminent film critic and travel writer.)

As the sales manager of a multinational cigarette company, he had occasion to visit all parts of India. In the pre- and post-independence India, salesmen of the ITC got princely treatment and were housed at government guest houses, free of charge. Montu Ray has some heart-warming

accounts of his encounters with the Maharajah of Porbandar, the Jamsaheb of Jamnagar, and other distinguished persons.

Thus, at Jamnagar, the local distributor received the couple, “with garlands and were driven to Lakshmi Vilas state guest house in an open convertible Daimler.”

It is disappointing that Montu Ray has not given us a more perceptive picture of the fading glory of the Raj and the travails of the birth of a new nation.

Not that Ray was not aware of them. He mentions (page 56): “So many exciting things were happening with the integration of the princely states with the Republic of India; the creation of the new state of Gujarat outside the Bombay Presidency; the launching of new products to curb the expansion of Panama...” (cigarette).

While being busy organising new markets for new brands created by ITC, Ray could find

time for maintaining a diary. This book, however, serves that purpose eminently well, structured in such a manner that it covers events in a five-yearly or ten-yearly cycle.

- P.K. Ravindranath

IT SHALL BE GREEN

AGAIN: By P.C.K. Prem,
Writers Workshop,
Calcutta, 1999, pp.99. Price
Rs.150/-.

Plodding through half of this slim volume, this reviewer wondered why this book was ever written, and more importantly, why it was published. The answer came in the last page "Writers Workshop - A Credo by P. Lal."

Writers Workshop (WW) is a one-man institution: P Lal is its proprietor; his bedroom is its office; he accepts manuscripts; he is editor, proof reader, manager, salesman. WW publishes, he claims, 100 titles a year.

No known writer is accepted. The aim is to "make names known." A book of poems comes in an edition of 350 copies and prose 500. The

author gets 10% of the number of copies published, free for sale or distribution among friends. WW markets the rest. The writer, besides, has to buy 100 copies, hawk them and earn his royalty.

P.C.K. Prem has nine books to his credit in English. Three of them were published by WW. By profession Prem is a bureaucrat.

"It Shall be Green Again" meanders along, mainly as a dialogue between its two principal characters - Manu and Raja Thakur. Most of the passages reflect ruminations of a bureaucrat - files and red-tape and a sedentary desk job adding weight to your girth.

Like all WW books, this one too has an impressive cloth-bound hard cover and a look that entitles it to a place on any decent bookshelf. The one-man production-managerial-editorial unit is clearly overtaxed to spend time over proofs. The result is an abundance of mistakes that do little credit to the covers.

- P.K. Ravindranath

"Shanmukha" Completes 25 Years

We have received a copy of the 'Shanmukha' issue commemorating its Silver Jubilee. This quarterly journal, published by Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts and Sangeeta Sabha (1952), Mumbai, has an established reputation for the high quality of its contents. The editor, Smt. Sulochana Rajendran, takes a legitimate pride in the journal having served as 'an instrument of education' and having promoted 'excellence in the fine arts'. The 25th year commemoration volume lives up to its reputation.

Though there are few articles exclusively written for the special number, the choice and arrangement of the articles show fine taste. Profiles of eminent Vidvans predominate - Kumbakonam Rajamanickam Pillai, Embar Vijayaraghavachariar, Pandit Hariprasad Chaurasia, Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer, Guru T. S. Krishnaswami, Guru Bipin Singh and Pandit

Devendra Murdeshwar. Among the general articles, Dr. R. Nagaswamy's piece on 'Bharata Natya As Portrayed In Paintings and Sculpture' is scholarly and informative. Dr. Vidyadhar Vyas wants India to take the lead in 'the emerging area of World Music'. The well-known music critic of Mumbai, Shri N. Hariharan, deplores the marginalisation of Veena players. 'Seekari', lamenting the neglect of 'sruti', says, "The tanpura helped the musicians realise the semi-tonal and micro-tonal variations which created overall aesthetics". Elegant production and colour photographs of the Kanchi Acharyas and sections of the Sabha building add to the attractiveness of this informative commemoration issue. Priced Rs. 25, the issue can be had from Shri S. Seshadri, Plot No. 292, Comrade Harbanslal Marg, Sion (E), Mumbai - 400 022. (Phone 403 02 13, 407 88 88. Fax. 409 22 11.)

- V.S.

Jaina Philosophy: An Introduction: by Mohan Lal Mehta, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bangalore – 560 001, 1998, Pages xii+313, Rs.160.

The present work is the third edition, revised and enlarged, of the book *Outlines of Jaina Philosophy*, published in 1954. It was then published by the Jain Mission Society of Bangalore. The P.V. Research Institute of Varanasi published the second edition.

The book contains eight chapters, starting with the history of Jainism, and a survey of the religious and philosophical literature. It then proceeds to an analysis of the key concepts of Jaina philosophy—*Reality, Soul, Matter, Knowledge, Judgement, and Karma*. It also contains a useful glossary of

Jaina technical terms.

Jaina philosophy is one of the most significant systems of Indian Philosophy. The system is too vast to be adequately treated in a single treatise. Mohan Lal Mehta has done an admirable job in providing the broad features of Jaina philosophy in a very lucid and comprehensive manner.

Professor Mehta is a renowned scholar of Jaina philosophy. He has published eight books in English and six books in Hindi on various aspects of Jainology. He has a deep and clear understanding of Jainism but his views are not biased. In the chapter on Reality, for instance, he provides a brief survey of the concept of realism from the standpoints of Idealism, Realism and Jainism. He is

aware that the Jaina Philosophy holds certain principles in common with Hinduism but is also mindful of its independent origin and free development. The book clearly depicts the similarities of Jaina philosophy with the other Indian systems and also its uniqueness. Professor Mehta points out that in Jaina philosophy animism, atomic theory, and karmic theory, are quite peculiar.

India is a land of multiple knowledge systems. In these days of globalization it is essential that an educated Indian is made aware of the various knowledge systems that developed in this land. Such awareness helps us to withstand the onslaught of western consumerism and also appreciate the rich variety of the Indian cultural fabric.

Readers who would like to understand the heterogeneity of Indian culture should be grateful to Professor Mehta for this useful introduction to one of the ancient systems of knowledge and also to Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bangalore, for making this long out-of-print book available once again. For *Jaina Philosophy*, is a very good book that can be recommended for any one who would like to know the basics of Jaina philosophy. I would like to suggest that translations of the book in regional languages would be of immense use for a very large number of readers.

- Prof. O. L. Nagabhushana Swamy.
(Department of English,
Maharani's Arts College for
Women, Bangalore-560 001.)



WITHOUT COMMENT

Statistics Without Substance

It was virtually a scene fit for the British comedy *Yes Minister*. The chairperson of the Maharashtra State Water Conservation Advisory Council and former Chief Minister Sudhakar Naik and the Minister of State for Water Conservation NPHirani had visited Nashik for a regional meeting, only to find that officials had nothing to show but statistics, more statistics and lies.

The meeting began with officials submitting piles of papers containing statistics of water conservation

works. Naik went through the statistics, frowned and kept them aside.

He said that the statistical information was impossible to comprehend. When he asked for details on the water conservation works, not even a single official could give any answer. There

was only a quick shuffle of papers with officials using expletives for their juniors and later asking for more time, with a sheepish

smile. When he cross-checked with Panchayat Samiti and Zilla Parishad members, he discovered

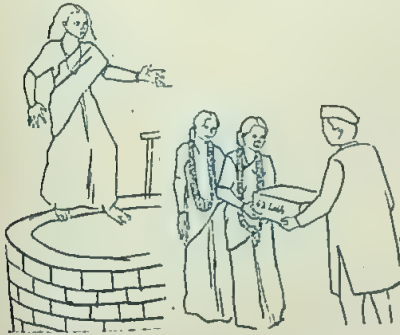


that the rosy picture existed only on paper.

- (The Indian Express, 27/7/2000).

A Greek Gift

The families of two martyrs from Nashik – Suresh Sonawane and Eknath Khairnar – have discovered that martyrdom can



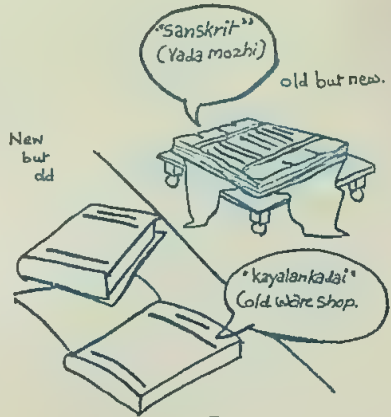
bring wealth which can break the family. In both cases, the widows have got huge compensation from the authorities to the tune of Rs 42 lakh each. In the case of Suresh Sonawane, the widow did not even allow the grand-parents to visit her one-year-old son. The agony finally led to suicide by Suresh's mother, Chhayabai, who jumped into a well to end her life – an event which has gone

unnoticed. Suresh's father has appealed to the authorities to make relevant changes in the rules to allow the martyrs' parents to claim compensation, which is currently given only to the widow.

- (The Indian Express, 27/7/2000).

Sanskrit Discovered Anew!

Education Minister K. Anbazhagan today strongly criticised the Sanskrit (*vada mozhi*) language by stating that it was born in a '*kayalankadai*' (old



ware shop). It was an artificial language. It was unacceptable that Sanskrit was a language of

communication with God and the Almighty knew only that language.

Sanskrit was not there when Tamil language was born, the Minister said, adding that it was introduced by Aryans when they invaded the sub-continent that, too, 500 years after Tamil language's origin. "No fool will believe that Tamil was born only after the birth of Sanskrit". He said Sanskrit was a mixture of various local languages in the North and it was developed by Aryans basically to communicate in script-form.

— (The Indian Express, 27/7/2000).

Information Technology:

A Dissenting Couple

Why are you opposed to Information Technology?

Laloo Prasad Yadhav, M.P: I do not think computers and the so-called Information Technology will serve any purpose in transforming the

economic and social structure of the country where over 90 per cent of the population is deprived of even basic needs like food, shelter and education. IT will benefit only the rich, who constitute 10 per cent of the population, and, in the process, push the whole country towards further backwardness. As it is, we are faced with an acute problem of unemployment and these television-like machines with screens will only add to our problems. They will render lakhs of people unemployed. At best, we can take the help of information technology to some extent in emergencies.



Smt Rabri Devi, Chief Minister of Bihar: Unless the entire country is developed on a par with urban areas, there is no need for computers. First, we will have to launch an intensive literacy campaign for the crores of the illiterate and ensure employment for the unemployed, particularly in rural areas. Only then can we dream of aping foreign countries and think of an I T revolution.

Our lifestyle is different from the entire world. We

have strong faith in God. Our women are religious-minded; they observe fasts to appease Gods. Multinationals and their products will come in the way of our religious freedom.

- (The Times of India 28/7/2000).

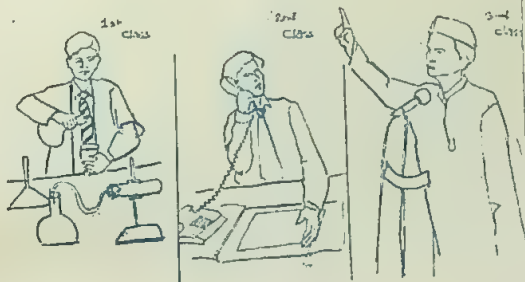
Politics For Whom?

It is unfair to club together Albert Camus and John Major, the former British Prime Minister. But both of them felt that politics "is not for people with first-class minds." The French existentialist said: "Politics and the fate of mankind are shaped by men without ideals, and without greatness of mind. Men with greatness in them, do not go in for politics".

John Major observed that "Men with first-class minds should be in science and

research; those with second-class minds in business and trade, and only others without these aptitudes should seek political careers."

- (From the editorial in 'The Times of India', 5/8/2000).



HYDERABAD KENDRA

JAPANESE EDUCATIONAL TEAM VISITS BHAVAN'S SCHOOL

A delegation of 24 Japanese nationals – principals, teachers and students – visited the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan's Public School, Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad, on July 31, 2000, forenoon. The delegation saw a cultural programme consisting of Indo-Japanese traditional dances, drawings and paintings of the children of Bhavan's school, Yoga exercises, Mehendi, Terracota, Rangoli, Banjara mirror work, vegetable carving, Indo-Japanese children drawings and Ikebana (Japanese flower arrangement).

This was followed by a lunch for all participants and guests. Dr. P.Siva Reddy, Chairman, Bhavan's Kendra, Prof. R.V.R. Chandrasekhar Rao (Chairman, Governing Body), Shri S. Gopalakrishnan, Hon. Treasurer, Shri N. Ramesh Kumar, IAS, Hon. Secretary and Shri V. Vedam, Director, were present.

Prof. R.V.R Chandrasekhar Rao addressed the delegation

members and explained to them the values of Indian culture and heritage as promoted by Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.

The arrangements made by the Principal of the school were very much appreciated by the visiting delegation.

The members of the delegation called on the Chief Minister Shri N. Chandrababu Naidu, at his residence on Aug 3, 2000 forenoon as arranged by the Principal. Smt. Bhuvaneshwari, wife of the Chief Minister, also met the delegation members. Smt. C. Rama Devi, Principal, Bhavan's Public School, Director and Hon. Treasurer, Bhavan's Hyderabad Kendra, attended the function at the Chief Minister's house. The Chief Minister appreciated the team-spirit and hard work of Japan in the field of science and technology and expressed the desire that there should be such regular cultural exchange programmes with a

view to promoting friendship and collaboration between the two countries.

Shri N. Balakrishna, a well known cine actor and son of the late Shri N.T. Rama Rao and his wife hosted the dinner for the

members of the delegation at his residence on August 3, 2000, preceded by a cultural show. Smt. Bhuvaneshwari, wife of the Chief Minister, was also present throughout the function.

CHENNAI SANKARA ADVAITA CENTRE SILVER JUBILEE

The Adi Sankara Advaita Research Centre, Chennai, celebrated its Silver Jubilee in the august presence of the Acharyas of the Kanchi Math on June 28 and 29, 2000 at the Sri Venkata Auditorium of Bhavan's Chennai Kendra.

The celebrations were inaugurated by H.H. Jagadguru Shri Jayendra Saraswati Swamigal and H.H. Shri



Kainkarya Siromani, Dr. S.V. Narasimhan, Chairman, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Chennai Kendra, receives the memento and honour from H.H. Jagadguru Shri Jayendra Saraswati Swamigal of the Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam.

Jagadguru Shri Sankara Vijayendra Saraswati Swamigal of the Kanchi Math.

Shri C.N. Ramachandran, President of the Centre, welcomed the gathering.

Dr. R. Balasubramanian, Editor of 'The Voice of Sankara', the half-yearly journal of the centre, delivered the presidential address.

Dr. S.V. Narasimhan, Chairman, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Chennai Kendra, gave the keynote address.

Two students and their teacher of the V.G.S. Gurukulam were honoured. The students completed a 10-year course in Gananta in Krishna Yajur Veda. The Guru was Shri V.G. Subramanya Ghanapati Sastrigal.

H.H. Shri Jayendra Saraswati Swamigal spoke on the relevance of Advaita philosophy to the modern man.

The Acharyas honoured some of the well-wishers and past office-bearers of the centre on the occasion.

The first day's programme

concluded with a dance-drama 'Sankara, Lokasankara' by Prof. Sudharani Raghupathy's students.

The valedictory function on 29th June started with an illuminating address by H.H. Swami Gautamananda Maharaj, President, Sri Ramakrishna Math, Chennai.

Shri M. Balaji, Vice-president of the Centre, welcomed and Dr. R. Krishnamurthy Sastrigal, Principal, Madras Sanskrit College, delivered the Presidential Address followed by a lecture on 'Advaita and Tirumandiram' by Prof. V. Rathinasabhapathy, Editor, 'Siddhantam', a journal from Chennai on Saiva Siddhanta.

Km Sangeetha Krishnamurthy and her party gave a music performance.

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